

A Welcome Announcement! Albert W. Aiken's "Strange Girl," a New England Love Story, will soon be commenced in the Saturday Journal.

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She grasped her rifle, and drawing back the hammer, took steady aim.

DEATH-NOTCH, THE DESTROYER: OR THE SPIRIT LAKE AVENGERS.

BY OLL COOMES.

Author of "Hawkeye Harry," "Boy Spy," "Ironsides, the Scout," etc.

CHAPTER XI.

A WHITE, WHITE FACE.

THE scene changes. It is midday. The sun looks down from a clear sky. The air is cool and bracing, and comes laden with a fresh perfume, sweet as the delicious fragrance of Araby or Ind. The forest is redolent with its songs of nature—who has not heard them in the wilderness?

It was like walking through a wildwood just from the hands of the Creator, to traverse that forest, where, but the night before, the storm-winds wrestled with the giant trees, and where death and mystery stalked abroad. And the river, which had broken from its confines and rushed and roared across the lowlands, had spent its fury and might, and shrunk back within its channels.

Not a sound could be heard nor a living object seen. The place seemed tenantless—an uninhabited solitude—unpressed by the foot of man or beast—a hallowed temple, or the home of invisible spirits.

But this was not the case. There was life within the forest and upon the river.

As the sun declined westward from his noonday meridian, a small bark canoe shot suddenly out into the river from the mouth of a little creek, over whose waters the dense foliage formed a dark green archway. In the little craft was seated a maiden, who had scarcely passed her sixteenth summer. She was a being of rare loveliness—sylph-like in form and feature. Her eyes were dark and lustrous, and shaded by long silken lashes. A wealth of dark hair was gathered back from a brow of Grecian mold and permitted to flow in rippling waves down over her snowy neck and shoulders.

She was dressed in a frock reaching only to her knees, and made in a style harmonizing with her form and beauty. A little straw hat, probably the labor of her own hands, crowned her head.

Before her lay a small silver-mounted rifle, while in her belt she wore a small stiletto-like knife.

She handled the paddle with great skill and dexterity, and sent the little craft flying up the stream, keeping within the shadows of the western bank.

A bright, healthful glow was upon her soft, rosy cheeks, and a sparkling light in her dark eyes.

Lightly the little canoe danced over the waters, while its fair occupant kept a close watch around her as if expecting some one, or as if on the look-out for danger. She continued to paddle her canoe on up the stream, never permitting her vigilance to relax for a moment.

At length her eye was arrested by a number of dark specks sailing in the air, some distance up the river. They were buzzards. And the forest beauty knew that their presence was attracted there by something below—something that promised them a feast.

They might be only following a party of savages like the sneaking wolf, for by instinct these birds have learned that the trail of a war-party is invariably marked with bloodshed and deserted quarry.

The maiden permitted the canoe to come to a stand while she watched the circling birds. She saw at once they were coming closer and closer, and seemed to be following the course of the river. She felt satisfied that it was some object floating on the bosom of the stream that the filthy birds were following. It might be a lifeless carcass, or, perchance, a convoy of savages going down the river. Startled by the last thought, and grasping the paddle firmly, she ran her canoe close in shore, and concealed herself under some drooping willows in a little cove, from whence she could still command a view of the river, some distance above.

She saw the buzzards still approaching—at times settling down almost to the treetops, then starting up again as if with fright. She now felt sure they were following a party of Indians, and listened intently to catch the dip of their paddles, or some sound that would confirm her belief.

But she heard nothing. The birds came closer and closer—now so near that she can see their bald heads and naked coral necks bent downward toward the bosom of the river.

Something is there. She can see it rounding the bend of the stream above her. It was a large log floating on the surface. As it came nearer, a cry burst from the lips of

the forest beauty, and horror is stamped upon her fair, sweet face. Upon the log she sees a human form lashed. It is the form of a man. It is bound upon the back, while the white, white face is staring heavenward. But there is no motion in it. It is lifeless!

CHAPTER XII.

AN ANGEL OF MERCY.

LIKE a graven image, the forest beauty sat with eyes fixed on the terrible sight before her—a man, apparently dead, and lashed upon a floating log.

As the terrible object came nearer, she saw that the unfortunate being was a white man—a mere youth. His arms were bent backward, and bound in a painful position. His clothes were soaking wet, and his dark hair was tangled over his head and neck in dripping masses.

Human pity and kindness asserted their power within the breast of the maiden. She knew at once some cruel foe had placed that unfortunate youth there, and she resolved to free him. But would it be of earthly use? Was he not beyond human aid?—dead?

The maiden gazed intently at him for this information. To her horror and disgust she saw a large buzzard settle down on the log, by the motionless head of the youth. Her soul sickened with a strange horror and suspense, for the next instant she expected to see the filthy bird bury its beak in the eyes of the dead. But a thought struck her—she would prevent the mutilation of that fair, boyish face.

She grasped her rifle and drew back the hammer. Just then she saw the vulture crane its neck and peer down into the pale, upturned face before it, with an almost human interrogative look. Then it uttered a startled cry, spread its great somber wings, and rose aloft into the air.

A cry of joy burst involuntarily from the maiden's lips. To her the bird's actions spoke plainer than words. The youth bound upon the log was not dead!

It did not require a second thought to decide the maiden's course of action. A few strokes of her paddle carried the little craft alongside of the floating log. She drew the keen little blade from her belt, and hastily severed the things that bound the beautiful young stranger in his awful position.

He was totally unconscious, and it required a great effort of the maiden to lift his form in her canoe. But she accomplished it with safety, and a murmur of thanks to Heaven issued from her trembling lips. The next moment she was driving her canoe rapidly down the river.

She soon came to the mouth of the little creek from which she had debouched into the river, a few minutes before. Up this green archway, sweet and cool as an Arcadian aisle, she headed her tiny craft, and plied the paddle with all the vigor her delicate frame possessed.

Ever and anon she gazed down into the unconscious face before her. It was boyish in feature, yet manly in expression. It was handsome, and wore a look of refinement; and the maiden's heart beat wildly and joyfully in eager anticipation of the moment when those eyes would open and those pale lips speak to her.

On she drove the canoe. She had traveled over half a mile, when she turned abruptly to the left, and entered the mouth of another stream. This she followed through dark forest and under tangled foliage for some fifty rods, when she suddenly burst into a little sunlit glade, in the center of which stood a little vine-embowered cabin.

It was a lovely spot—a miniature paradise. Flowers grew on every side, while the whole was compassed on all sides by the dark, green forest.

Running her canoe ashore, the maiden landed, and tripping across the little glade, entered the cabin with a familiarity that told it was her home. In a moment she returned, followed by a young man whose features bore a striking resemblance to her. It was the youth that met Sylvén Gray, the day previous, near Stony Cliff. It was Ralph St. Leger!

His face did not look so bright as when we first saw him. It was a little pale and haggard, and his eyes were heavy and hollow, as though he had just recovered from a spell of sickness.

"Where did you find the young man, sister Vida?" asked Ralph, as together they crossed the glade.

"On the river, Ralph, lashed to a floating log. Some person must have had a demon's heart to bind him there. He is so young and handsome, and I know he is not a bad man."

They came to the canoe, and as Ralph St. Leger gazed upon the face of the unconscious youth in the canoe, his face turned very pale, and he started slightly. But his sister did not notice his emotion. She was too absorbed in emotions of her own over the young stranger's welfare.

"Ah! a stranger," said St. Leger.

"Yes," responded Vida, "and think you there is any hope for him?"

"There may be. I will carry him to the cabin, and we must do all we can to restore him to life."

Ralph stepped into the canoe, and lifting

the unconscious young stranger in his strong arms, carried him to the cabin and placed him on a soft couch.

"Now, Vida," said Ralph, "you will have to be spry. We'll have to labor long and hard to bring him to life. While I chafe the limbs and bathe his brow, you prepare some strong herb tea for stimulants. I see, little Vida, the handsome face of the stranger has awakened a wonderful interest in your young heart."

Tears of joy gathered in Vida's eyes. The long lashes drooped upon the olive cheeks, and a crimson flush swept over her pretty face. She made no reply to her brother's remark, but turned away, and was soon busy in another apartment, preparing stimulants for the young, unconscious stranger.

CHAPTER XIII.

A NEW EXISTENCE.

WHEN Fred Travis recovered from the stunning blow, which he was sure had been dealt him by Death-Notch, he first became conscious of the fact that he was lying upon a soft couch, while dark walls surrounded him. He could not recall his situation. His senses were confused and bewildered, his brain was feverish and excited. Weird visions of demons were flitting before his eyes, and now and then he could see a colossal shadow pass before him.

He was conscious of existence, yet he was in doubt as to the state of that existence. His surroundings did not seem of earth. He had surely passed into another sphere. His senses struggled to assert their former power, but something like a vague charm held them asunder—a charm that no effort of his own will could break.

But, suddenly, a sound like that of a footstep broke upon his ear, and that strange spell was broken, and reason with Fred Travis had asserted its throne. He started up and gazed in confusion around him. He felt of his aching, throbbing head. A bandage was upon it.

But where was he? He gazed around the room in which he lay. It was almost dark, yet he was enabled to see its outer walls were made of logs. Before him hung a curtain that separated his room from one more commodious. He drew aside the curtain and looked out into the apartment. He started with surprise. The room was flooded with the light of day and furnished with the elegance of an Oriental boudoir! The walls were covered with woven hangings of a rich, harmonious color that formed a beautiful background for the pictures that adorned it. The floor was covered



with a carpet of curiously-wrought material that looked like Spanish moss woven in with silken threads. There was a table in one corner upon which were books of various kinds, and a vase of flowers that diffused their sweet perfume through the room. A beautiful cornucopia hung upon the wall and was filled with fragrant flowers and fruits fresh from the wildwood. Upon a low ottoman near a little window lay a stringed musical instrument.

Fred Travis was dumfounded. He could scarcely believe the evidences of his own eyes. Whose home was he in? Surely he had been transported to some other realm. No wildwood home could be so comfortable and luxurious as that.

He starts. He hears a soft footstep entering the room. He drops the curtain, and lays back upon the couch. He sees a shadow flit across the curtain. It was the shadow of a woman. Was it an angel?

He had scarcely asked himself the question when the sound of music broke upon his ears, sweet, harmonious and dulcet-like in its strains. Some one was playing on the instrument he had seen lying upon the ottoman. The air was solemn and slow, and awakened every emotion in the young man's breast. He listened to the music, entirely enraptured. Suddenly the clear, sweet voice of a woman entered into the melody with a harmonious accompaniment, and to Fred it seemed as though an angel's voice was pouring out its inspirations in one holy, enchanting strain. He listened for several moments. The music had now descended to one of those low, dying chords which the ear devours so eagerly, and he could no longer resist the desire that tempted his heart. He lifted one corner of the curtain, and gazed, unobserved, upon the sweet, fair face of the young singer, Vida St. Leger.

For fully a minute he feasted his eyes upon her form and face, his very soul entranced, not only by the rapturous melody of her voice, but the loveliness of her features.

At length he sunk back upon his couch, his heart in a tumult of emotions. And now his mind became actively engaged in thought. Somewhere he had seen that fair face before. Was it not in his dreams? He thought long. One by one he recalled the incidents of the past two days.

He started suddenly with a strange shudder. It was the same face as that of the youthful horseman that he and his friends had seen the day before, galloping through the woods in male attire—the same whom Omaha had said was Death-Notch!

But, that such a fair, delicate creature could be so terrible a being as the young Sculp-Hunter, seemed utterly preposterous. But, who was she? Surely not a demon in angel disguise.

At last the music ceased. Then Fred heard her footsteps approaching him. The curtain was drawn aside, and the eyes of Vida St. Leger met those of her invalid protegee.

She started slightly on seeing his eyes were open, and gazing into hers with a conscious light; but, quickly recovering from her sudden emotion, she said:

"You are better, I see, young stranger."

Her voice thrilled Fred's heart with renewed strength and hope.

"Indeed, fair maiden," he replied, rising to his elbow, "I knew not until a few minutes ago that I was in existence since I was stricken down in the forest. But, how came I here?"

"Are you strong enough to hear a long story?" Vida questioned.

"Yes," he replied, "I feel strong as ever."

Vida then seated herself near his couch, and narrated to him the terrible position in which she found him; how she had rescued him from the log and carried him home in her canoe, and how, for the remainder of that day and the night that followed, she and her brother had stood over him and labored to rekindle the spark of life that still lingered within his body.

Fred was astounded by her narrative. He knew nothing of the terrible ordeal through which he had passed after he was beaten down on the night of the storm. It was well that he did not.

In the kindest of words he thanked and blessed Vida for her goodness of heart toward him. They talked on—one subject led to another, and finally Vida asked:

"How came you to be beaten down unconscious in the woods? Surely it was not done by an Indian, or he would never have left his work undone, nor taken the trouble to tie you to a log and send you adrift."

"You have heard of Death-Notch, the young Sculp-Hunter, have you not?" Fred asked.

Vida grew pale, and fear seemed to take possession of her.

"Yes," she replied, "I have oftentimes heard of him, and the name fills me with terror."

"It was he that beat me down," said Fred, and he watched the face of the maiden closely.

A little cry burst from her lips.

"Death-Notch is a terrible being," she said. "I have never seen him, but within a stone's throw of our cabin his terrible death-notch is on two or three trees, under which brother Ralph found the lifeless bodies of Indians. I fear him more on brother's account than my own, for he is away so much of the time."

"Is your brother a hunter and trapper?"

"Oh, sir!" she exclaimed, as with a sudden pang, "I wish you had never asked me that question."

"I beg a thousand pardons, dear girl," said Fred, apologetically; "you need not answer my question if it is distasteful to you."

"I would like to answer the question if I could," Vida replied, sadly, "but my brother's calling is unknown to me. He hunts and traps, it is true, but only sufficient for our sustenance. I am afraid that there is something he is keeping concealed from me. He is away from home most of his time, and when I ask him where he has been, and about his success, he evades both questions. But he is the only friend I have, and I love him with all the fervor of a sister's heart, and I know he loves me. During the eight months we have dwelt here in this secluded spot, you are the first person who has been in our house besides ourselves; and yours is the first white face, besides brother's, that I have seen for months, although the settlement of Stony Cliff is only twenty miles from here. But I am afraid to go there."

"Why so?" asked Fred.

"I love my brother, as I said before. And I have a suspicion of what he follows, and to you I shall confide my suspicions."

"You can do so, dear girl, with perfect

safety. Not one word will I breathe to a living soul. I would not—I could not betray the hand that rescued me from death."

"Oh, thank you! thank you!" she cried, joyfully. "It is so nice to have one in whom you can confide, and I hope brother will yet explain away the secret which I feel certain is connected with his absence. My suspicions, however, are that he is one of Pirate Paul's robbers, if he is not Pirate Paul himself."

"What have you upon which to base your opinion, besides his refusing to account for his constant absence from home?" asked Fred.

"I have found letters in his pockets directed to Pirate Paul, but written in cipher. But, hark! I hear a footstep. Brother is coming!"

She dropped the curtain and turned aside, while Fred again lay down upon his couch.

Then he heard the door swing open and a footstep cross the threshold. He heard the sister's kind and welcome greeting and a kiss.

Then he heard the brother say:

"You are looking both troubled and pleased, my little sister. Why is it? Is not your handsome young patient better?"

Fred did not hear her answer, for that voice froze his blood almost with terror.

It was the voice of Death-Notch, the young Sculp-Hunter!

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MAGIC RING.

They met at their old trysting-place—Ralph St. Leger and Sylvene Gray.

Ralph was looking a little pale and worn, while Sylvene's face wore a bright smile and her heart was throbbing wildly under the emotions of anxiety and fear—anxiety to test the power of the ring which Martha Gregory had given her, and a fear that it would prove her handsome boy-lover a pirate, as Scott Shirely had declared him to be.

After their first greeting, Sylvene said:

"You look tired and exhausted, Ralph."

"I am a little tired, dear Sylvene," the youth replied. "I have traveled far this morning."

"Just to meet me, Ralph?" queried the maiden, a tender light beaming in her eyes.

"Yes, sweet Sylvene. To keep my promise with you. I would let nothing detain me, unless it was death."

"You are very true to me, dear Ralph. But, do you never grow tired of your hunter life—of wandering through the forest alone?"

"I can not say I am entirely alone, Sylvene. Your presence is ever before me to cheer me and give me bright hopes for the future."

Sylvene nestled closer to the manly form of her lover. She could not doubt his honesty of heart. His free, open countenance spoke plainer than words could have done of his innocence. The Hudson Bay Agent must have been mistaken about his being Pirate Paul. The only thing that seemed strange to her about Ralph was in his refusing to go to the settlement and live.

But she recounted for this through a boyish bashfulness and reticence, although he appeared like one who had been reared in the company of refined society.

Her greatest fears for him were of Death-Notch, for almost every day came fabulous stories of that terrible being's vengeance. But, then, there is no end to border superstition, and she prayed that those stories might be without any foundation.

They talked on for some time. They talked of their love, and some nonsense, as lovers will; and finally the subject changed to that of the Prairie Pirates, and during its discussion Sylvene watched every expression of her boy-lover's eye and every lineament of his features. But she saw no trace of an evil heart or guilty conscience.

Still the power of the ring had not been tested, and, with this end in view, she permitted her little hand to steal slyly into the hard palm of her lover. He pressed it gently, then raised it to his lips.

The ring caught his eye. He gazed at it for a moment, then an exclamation of surprise burst from his lips.

"Sylvene," he asked, "where did you get that ring? It's hers—my darling, sainted—"

He did not finish the sentence. Sylvene tore herself from his embrace, and while her face grew livid with scorn and indignation, a cry that came from a broken heart welled to her lips.

"Sylvene! Sylvene!" the youth cried, "what is the meaning of all this?"

"Ralph St. Leger!" she almost shrieked, "you have deceived me! You are a robber—a pirate—you are Pirate Paul himself!"

"Sylvene, stay! One word, I implore you! Sylvene! Sylvene!"

But Sylvene was deaf to his entreaties. With a cry that deepened into a sob of anguish, she turned and fled toward the village.

"My God, what is the meaning of all this?" exclaimed Ralph St. Leger, in agony of heart. "Some one is deceiving Sylvene, or else Heaven has forsaken me! Sylvene, oh, my darling Sylvene! this mistake shall be rectified! I swear this! And I dare the vengeance of Stony Cliff itself, and my enemies, whoever they are, shall suffer for this!"

He jerked his rifle to his shoulder, turned and strode away into the woods at a rapid pace.

But scarcely was he lost from view in the depths of the undergrowth, when the little figure of an Indian glided from a clump of bushes hard by, and stole away directly on the trail of the young hunter.

CHAPTER XV.

RED ELK ON THE WAR-PATH.

The wildest excitement prevailed within the Indian village when it became known that Death-Notch had been in their midst—in their council-lodge; had stricken down one of their leaders, and then fled on the horse of Le Subtle Fox.

The body of the young chief, Red Antelope, whom those in the council-lodge supposed the terrible Death-Notch to be, was soon brought in. He was scalped, and bore the death-notch of his slayer.

The fury of the savage band became great. They surged to and fro like maddened beasts. They uttered their fearful war-cries and grappled with imaginary foes.

It was some time before Lakpadah could restore order and assemble his chiefs in council again. When he did, however, Le Subtle Fox was still among them, feeling thankful that Death-Notch had let him off with no further loss than that of his horse.

The old chief addressed the council with

all the eloquence of which he was master. He portrayed in vivid colors the destruction that Death-Notch was visiting upon his people. He invoked their immediate vengeance.

His hearers responded in cries that asserted their readiness for action.

Le Subtle Fox also addressed the assembly in a few pointed remarks that seemed to have more influence upon the savages than the chief's speech. This was probably because the chief had stuck to the truth, while the wily renegade had soared away into eloquent falsehoods, so readily devoured by the Indian warriors.

Le Subtle Fox remained at the village until he had accomplished his mission, and learned the course the Indians intended to pursue; then he took his departure from the place.

The night wore away, and on the following morning several war-parties were dispatched in all directions to assist the party already absent under Sleepy-Eyes in the search for the terrible Death-Notch.

But before night one of the parties returned with the remnant of the young chief's party, and the body of the young chief himself.

From the lips of the warriors the Indians learned of the conflict at the deserted hut where Sleepy-Eyes was slain. They also received a confirmation of Le Subtle Fox's story of a new foe, calling themselves the Eight Avengers, being in the country. And terrible foes they threatened to be, for the affair at the deserted hut was their first blow.

They were to the knife! Vengeance! vengeance! were the cries that passed from lip to lip of the savage foe; and the following morning a dozen different parties were sent forth in every direction. One under the daring chief, Red Elk, was sent down the river toward Stony Cliff to intercept the Eight Avengers if possible.

His warriors numbered about a score, and were the flower of the tribe in point of bravery and physical strength. They were painted and plumed, until they appeared hideous, and were armed with the best weapons in all the tribe.

These men took their departure on foot, and after journeying through the forest until they came to the river, they changed their direction and followed the course of the stream.

At a rapid pace they pushed on, and the day was half gone when they observed a canoe coming up the river. There was an Indian in it, and a second glance assured the savages that it was a scout who had been sent out from the town a day or two previous.

Red Elk's party at once made their presence known, and soon the scout was in their midst.

"What news does Creeping-Vine bring from the camp of our enemies?" asked Red Elk.

"The pale-face enemies are abroad. They are called Avengers, and are led by a dog of an Omaha. Death-Notch still prowls through the woods for the scalps of the Dakotas and Sioux."

"Has Creeping-Vine seen the pale-faces under the Omaha?"

"He has; and has heard them talk. He lay hid under some old leaves when they broke camp. They are now searching for a friend whom they lost on the night of the storm. They fear Death-Notch struck their friend down."

"Then Death-Notch strikes down the pale-faces, too?"

"Yes."

"Where now are those calling themselves The Eight Avengers?"

"On the march. To-night they will encamp on the Hunter's Island, below Eagle Rock."

"How does Creeping-Vine know this?"

"The pale-face lays out his plans and marks out his course before he starts. I heard the Avengers say where they would encamp to-night, before they left their camp this morning."

"Then," said Red Elk, a glow of triumph beaming from his small, evil eyes, "before another sun rises the scalps of the Avengers shall hang at the girdle of Red Elk and his warriors. We will entrap them, as the pale-faces entrap the beaver."

When the wily chief had thus expressed himself, he moved on down the stream toward Hunter's Island, followed by his warriors.

CHAPTER XVI.

OLD SHADOW.

Just at daybreak a little party of seven persons broke camp in the forest south of Stony Cliff, and headed their way up the Sioux river.

It was the Spirit Lake Avengers, now led by the friendly Omaha. Those wounded at the deserted hut had so far recovered as to be able to set forward on their journey again. They had been kindly treated while at Stony Cliff, and had received urgent invitations to remain; but the unknown fate of Fred Travis proved a keen spur to their anxiety and impatience, and they at once set out in search of him.

They had already hunted the forest through in the vicinity of the deserted hut, and as they could find no trace of him, they thought he might have been taken captive by the Indians and carried away to their village. If so, they hoped to be in time to save him.

The Omaha being well acquainted with the topography of the country through which they were journeying, they moved with expedition.

At distance of a good day's travel from where they broke camp, there was an island in the river, which they aimed to reach ere sunset. But in this they were disappointed. It was dark when a point opposite the island was reached. And now they met with another obstacle between them and the island. For the want of a canoe some hours would be consumed in constructing a raft. But it was their only recourse.

Searching along the bank for drift-logs, they were so fortunate as to find a raft, already constructed, lying lodged against the river bank.

It showed signs of having been recently made. A number of old, dry logs had been placed parallel with each other, and in this manner lashed together with green bark and withes. The logs were very large—some of them three feet in diameter. Half of this thickness was submerged in the water.

At first, Omaha thought there might be something tricky about the raft, but a careful examination set aside all his fears. As the raft was not made fast, they supposed it had been floated there by the late flood from some point above.

Boarding the rude affair, the Avengers towed it out into the middle of the river, then permitted it to drop down, at the will of the current, against the upper side of the island, where it could not be drifted away.

The island was a small tract of sandy soil, covered with a dense growth of willows. It was elevated several feet above the highest water mark. In the center was a bare spot of sand, and in the center of this was a wide, flat stone covered with the ashes of a recent camp-fire.

The island was a favorite camping-place of the hunter, trapper, Indian, or whoever happened to be journeying in the parts, on account of the natural advantages offered as a protection against the sudden surprise of an enemy; and, at the date of our story, it was known as Hunter's Island.

As the Avengers did not deem it safe to strike a fire, they ate their supper from the remnants of their morning meal. When the repast was over, Omaha made a careful circuit of the island.

"You think, then, an enemy could not surprise us here?" asked Meredith, when the friendly reappeared.

"No; if an Indian, or any one, can get onto the island without me seeing him before he gets here, then will Omaha give up that he is a better scout, and—"

"Then, laddy, I guess ye'll have to knock under to yer granddaddy."

The Avengers started to their feet, with sudden surprise and blank astonishment written upon their faces. The last voice was that of a stranger who had appeared in their midst as silently as though he had been dropped from the clouds.

He was a tall, lean, hawk-like individual, of perhaps, some forty years of age, dressed in a suit of greasy buck-skin. His head was surmounted by a coon-skin cap, from which the hair was worn off, and which appeared like a bald poll. His face was angular and cadaverous; his nose prominent and slightly Roman, and his gray eyes small, yet glittering like two coals of fire beneath their shaggy brows. His free, careless and reckless air was suggestive of one of the old type of brave, jovial old trappers of the Northwest.

He carried a fine-looking rifle, a side tomahawk, a knife and a brace of pistols, and as he appeared before the band of Avengers, he dropped the butt of his rifle to the ground, and, clasping his hands over the muzzle, assumed an easy, reclining attitude.

For a moment our young friends gazed upon this odd specimen of humanity in silent wonder, and before either of them could speak, he asked:

"Am I a stunner, though?"

"I must admit you are," replied Amos Meredith, confusedly; "but who are you, anyhow?"

"Wal, I can't say for sartin, as to that," replied the stranger, with a comical smile; "but I guess I'm a rantankerous ole cuss that's been rippin' over this little patch o' yearth called Nor' America for somethin' nigh on to forty-five years. I'm a lad o' leisure and pleasure; hunt a little, trap a little, and splice the hull now and then with an 'Injin skull. I've no women-folks to cry after me—oh no—nor wash me duds. I generally wear a suit till they get dirty; then I throw myself into the river and flummix erbout awhile, and come out clean as a newborn pawnee. But, as to my name. If we should continue to sojourn together, call me enny thing, so ye call me in time for a leg o' turkey or a hump o' venison. Over on the Platte they called me Lanky Joe; down on the 'big muddy' they called me Dagger-Eyes and Rattle-pate; and up on the Republican Fork they call me Ole Shadder."

"A very suggestive name, considering not only your anatomy, but the silence with which you appeared among us," said Frank Harriott.

"And faith, ould feller, let mees ax if there are enny ax yees to make a shader?" said Phelix O'Ray.

"Wal, now, youngster with the boggy tongue, do ye s'pose yer goin' to have a laugh at my expense? If so, I'm lanky. I like sport like a turtle does sunshine, and I know you're a jolly set. But I'm jist s'leed an old scalp-pole as nature made me, and it's durned doubtful whether I'd make a shader, or even a grease-spot, if I was rubbed out. But I'm wiry as an ole black-snake; and what Ole Shadder's eyes can't see, ain't wuth lookin' arter."

As he spoke, the old hunter glanced warily toward the upper side of the island quite frequently. This apparent uneasiness did not escape the notice of the young men, and despite his oddity and boisterous voice, they apprehended that all was not right. But before either of them could make any remark or inquiry, the old fellow's tongue set off again:

"I reckon as what ye young cubs think I'm a s'pose old rattlepate, but, the fact o' it is, it's s'cessin' nature to me to keep blabbin' and clatterin' away like an ole woman or a blue jay. But then, thar's policy in tongue-talk sometimes. Specially in the present case."

"What do you mean?" asked young Meredith. "I see there is an undercurrent in your conversation."

"Wal, now that's what I've been drivin' at," said Ole Shadder; "and now," and his voice fell almost to a whisper—"if ye lads don't want to lose yer scalps, ye've got to git out o' this quick as wink yer eye."

The Avengers started.

"Are there Indians about?" one of them asked.

"Bet yer hair on't. So close that one big leap will bring twenty tomahawks onto yer noggin's."

"You're surely jestin'!" exclaimed Dick Carter.

"Not a bit o' it. But ye can do jist as ye please, boys, but Ole Shadder leaves instant. Too hot 'round here fur me—too much brimstone."

"I can't see where a foe could possibly be concealed so close to us," said Frank Harriott. "But if there are Indians about, we had better take to the raft and go ashore."

"Thar's no need o' packin' the red devils with ye, so jist let that raft alone. The three big logs in the center o' it are holler, and on the under side o' them are a dozen holes, chopped there with tomahawks, and in every hole there is an Injin's head and a neck run up into the holler."

"Heavens!" exclaimed Harriott, "is it possible?"

"Verily I say unto ye, it is the case. I seed 'em make the raft, and heard 'em talk 'bout it, and all what it war fur. They knowed ye were comin', and intended to stop on Hunter's Island. A red varlet they called Creeping-Vine brought 'em the news. Creeping-Vine overheard ye fellers say whar you intended to stop, and I heard the

durned pups settin' their traps to catch ye. They left Creeping-Vine over on shore to give the signal fur the attack to begin, in case ye war unkeerful enough, as the reds supposed ye would be, to pack 'em over here in that raft. But Creeping-Vine will never give that signal."

As he concluded, the old hunter tapped his girdle in a significant manner. The scalp of Creeping-Vine was dangling there!

"Now," he continued, "thar's my canoe. Take it and run yersef over to the east shore, then one o' ye bring it back arter me. I'll stay and talk away here like rip and blazes, and make the doctroted knaves think yer all set up with the extract o' sod corn."

"Haddn't one of us better remain with you?" asked Meredith; "you might get into trouble."

"Never mind me, boys. I'm ole greased lightning on a run or swim, and if I wunce git started thar's no bullet or arrer as can catch me. So *git*, boys, and go easy as a shader."

The young men took up their rifles, and crossing the island to the lower side, entered the old hunter's canoe, while the hunter himself sat down and began singing the old familiar border song that ran thus:

"The possum he grined at the old hedhog. At the old hedhog, at the old hedhog: The possum he grined at the old hedhog, Way down by the Squamun river," etc.

"He's an odd genius," said Frank Harriott, as they pushed out into the river, and permitted the canoe to drop silently down-stream.

In a few moments they had effected a safe and noiseless landing on the east bank of the river. Then Omaha returned with the canoe, and brought Old Shadder over from the island.

"Yah! haw! haw!" laughed the old hunter, "it's a good 'un on 'em pizen varlets, by cracky it is! And now I'll give the signal that Creeping-Vine, the former owner o' this 'ere scalp, war to give. A—y! a—y!"

As the last two cries echoed through the woods, every eye was fixed upon the raft that lay plainly revealed by the moonlight. Instantly there was heard a fluttering in the water, then a score of dark forms were seen to rise from the stream around the raft, and leap onto the island with a yell that resounded for miles and miles.

Across the island they swept, their uplifted tomahawks gleaming in the moonlight. But their triumph was soon turned to disappointment and rage, for they found their enemy was gone—the birds had flown.

Old Shadder chuckled with suppressed laughter, and rubbed his horny palms with glee, and for awhile it seemed as though he would be unable to restrain his emotions.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 136.)

The Red Scorpion:
OR,
THE BEAUTIFUL PHANTOM.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.,
AUTHOR OF "PLAINING TALLEMAN," "BLACK CREEPER," "HOODWINKED," "HERCULES, THE HUNCHBACK," "PEARL OF PEARLS," "ETC., ETC., ETC."

CHAPTER XVII.

MORNING dawned, and with it a new consternation spread through the mansion at Birdwood.

It passed from lip to lip that Mrs. Kurtz was stricken with that terrible fever which had snatched Eddy away from a loving circle. And, as in the case of the child, it came with startling suddenness.

The consternation became a horror, then created a panic. Several of the newer servants immediately began packing their chests for a hasty departure; a number of workmen employed near the house left, dreading that they might carry the strange, incurable disease home to their wives and little ones.

Again the physician was summoned; and again was the worthy practitioner baffled. Not the application of every test at his command was adequate to solve the problem of his case.

As the hours advanced, the patient grew worse. By the arrival of noon, an ominous gloom had settled over the mansion.

Storms and Gimp had not yet returned to the city; the first remaining on account of his engagement with Lorilyn—and the lawyer evinced a remarkable interest in the illness of Mrs. Kurtz. He was thoughtful, silent, something weighty seemed pressing on his mind, as he walked the lawn, with hands behind his back, and switching his coat-tail nervously.

Suddenly he paused.

"Now, I wonder!" he exclaimed, gazing steadfastly at the grassy carpet. "Can it be that old devil-face has a hand in this? It looks suspicious—mighty suspicious. When I sat at the window, at the tavern of the Red Ox, I heard him say: 'One hour more, and I start—another hour, and I fall like a thunderbolt, in the house of Karl Kurtz. If he hesitates, if he dares resist the command of the letter—Antoine Martinet, I'll do my work.' Those were his very words."

Thaddeus Gimp was deeply absorbed in his musings. Presently he continued:

"Now, that old devil-face has fallen 'like a thunderbolt,' I may safely declare; for, if ever I saw a man more scared by something than Kurtz is, then may every whisky 'sang' I drink contain a spider! More: when I came here that night, and vowed to know what it was they carried about in the metal box, did I not keep my word?—did I not enter their room in a burglarious manner; answer old devil-face when he called to his follower; steal the box from under the bed; take it to my room; examine its contents—nearly frightening myself to death!—and then return it to its place? And what was in that box? A scorpion—a slimy-looking, poison-fanged scorpion, crimson as the paint on the cheek of a belle! It was a beauty—of its kind. Why do they carry that scorpion around, eh? What work is it this man would do, if Karl Kurtz refused to



ner was uneasy; and Gimp noticed that she was dressed to go out.

He thought it strange that she was not at the bedside of her aunt, in that hour when a soothing hand and comforting voice can accomplish wonders; but he said nothing, and passed on.

The apartment he sought was darkened and quiet. A faithful maid stood near, ready to lend assistance at a moment's call; and at the bedside, his head bowed and breast racked by an unspeakable grief, sat Karl Kurtz.

The doctor was bending over Mrs. Kurtz, still striving to catch some clue to the ailment of his patient, though hopeless while he tried.

One white arm of the invalid lay across the rich coverlet, and as Gimp advanced, his eyes were fixed upon the member. As he drew near, his glance centered on a tiny red spot, hardly visible.

"Discovered any thing?" to the man of medicine.

"No, sir—I it is very singular, and—fact is—no, I've discovered nothing yet." It evidently went sorely against grain for a physician of many years' experience and well-earned reputation to acknowledge himself at fault.

"Seen this?" he continued, interrogatively, pointing to what had attracted his attention.

"Oh, yes; that's nothing. A musketo bite, probably."

"Musketo in June?" said the lawyer, in a questioning way.

"Yes; I've seen them here. They don't have them further north till much later in the season. But musketoes in this section, this early, are a common thing."

"Are, eh?" "Um!"

Gimp was not satisfied. He inspected the faint discoloration more closely.

Karl Kurtz seemed scarcely to notice the presence of others. His mind was wrapped in his woes; he felt as if a fate were gradually sweeping away those things he held dearest in the world. First, his child; and now, his wife—his stay, his prop, his loved companion through the varying panorama of life—was slowly leaving him; she, too, would, ere long, start upon that mystery-shadowed flight from earth to heaven.

Thaddeus Gimp was examining the small spot upon the arm. It was a keen gaze he bent; and, gradually, as his eyes became accustomed to the light of the room, he fancied he detected a minute black dot in the center of the almost imperceptible spot.

In a few seconds he straightened his corpulent body with a jerk, and stroked his chin; while he thought:

"That woman has been stung—I'll bet a dozen 'sangs' on it; and it wasn't a musketo, either" (with a covert glance at the physician). "Now, old devil-face has got a scorpion in his metal box. I have heard that it stings with its tail; the puncture made is very small; I opine that the 'work' I heard old devil-face speak of meant the destruction of this family! And that red scorpion is doing it! By the nose of Bacchus! I'm sure I'm right—so I'll go ahead. I'll see devil-face; I'll charge him with it; I'll make him 'own up,' and clear him out before these doings go any further."

Acting upon his resolution, he hurried from the room.

But, Vincent Carew could not be found. "He's went to the city, sir—he and his man," answered one of the servants, of whom he made inquiries.

"How long ago?"

"Hardly fifteen minutes, sir, I guess."

"Um! so. Well, I shall have to wait," mused the lawyer, disappointed. "When he comes back—surely, he will come back—then I'll pin him; I'll nail him fast! hang me, if I don't! Look sharp, devil-face!"

When Lorilyn passed Thaddeus Gimp on the stairs, she hastened to the parlor. Here she found Oscar Storms.

"Lorilyn—my love—"

"You are ready, Oscar?" she interrupted.

"Ready! Always ready to obey your will. Yes, I have been waiting for you."

He made a movement to draw her to him; but she evaded his embrace, while she said:

"And you are willing to take me, Oscar, despite the mystery which my actions create?" drooping her eyes beneath his ardent gaze.

"I would take you, Lorilyn, though I must needs stand blindfold at the altar!"

"You have faith in me?—for, I will tell you, after we are married, why I am so anxious to act secretly—when no power on earth can wrest me from you, if I be unwilling."

"My faith is illimitable, darling."

"See—here is the carriage. Let us go."

The carriage was approaching from the circle-drive, and they went out to it.

Proudly he assisted her to her seat. Soon, the hand he clasped was to be his, by right of law and right of church. The very thought was a dream of bliss.

When they reached the Oz, Oscar sought the landlady, and made known his want.

"A room, if you please—the best in the house. Then, I wish to see you in private."

"A room, is it?" Jerry O'Connough was able and pleased to furnish the desired accommodations.

The man who had driven them over was dismissed, with the order to return for them at sunset.

"An! is it in private y'd see me?" spoke Jerry, when he had shown them to a room, and closed the door after him.

"Yes, Mr. O'Connough. You can do us a very great favor."

"What is it, then?"

"Have you not some one whom you can dispatch to town for us?"

"Yis," said O'Connough, wondering what his guests could want. "There's only Cyp—he's goin' to town this mornin'; an' if it's anythin' he kin bring, why, sure—"

"I want to send a note to the Rev. C. Y. Clycke, No. —H—ld street. The directions are on the envelope. Do you think your man could find the residence?"

"Sure, he could that." And Jerry opened his eyes at mention of the clergyman, as a faint suspicion came into his mind.

"Very well; here is the note" (handing him a sealed envelope). "And you may tell your man, I'll pay him liberally, if he executes his errand promptly. We are in great haste to have the reverend gentleman come. We will keep this room till sunset. And Mr. O'Connough, I would like the fact of our presence here to remain a secret."

"Divil a word'll pop from my tongue! An! is that all?"

"Yes."

"Then I'll be after Cyp—the blackguard!—beggin' your pardin', Miss—and I'll tell

'im. Would ye have a little wine, or the like, to play with the time ye're waitin'?"

"Yes, you may send us some refreshments."

Jerry O'Connough hastened to intercept the darkey, who was about starting to town for marketing purposes.

Cyp was instructed in regard to the letter, and told to hurry.

And Jerry was somewhat flurried in manner, as he turned to answer the loud calls for him at the bar; for he knew Lorilyn as one of the ladies at Birdwood, and he was wondering if there really was going to be a marriage in the room upstairs.

CHAPTER XVII.

AGAIN did Devil-Carew laugh in his sleeve at the futile efforts of the family physician to discover the ailment of his patient.

Twice he had struck his fendish blows within that house, where, until his coming, all had lived in uninterrupted peace, quietude, and happiness; twice his foul instrument of death had been applied—once in keeping with an oath taken in the last hour of the life of the man called Antoine Martinet, and the second time as a vent to the anger he felt when Karl Kurtz so rashly braved him with an injudicious openness.

It was a source of satisfaction to this dark-faced, dark-hearted man—after his discomfiture of the night previous, when he had been thwarted in his designs upon the life of Oscar Storms, when he might well infer from Lorilyn's words and actions on the dueling ground that she loved the young man—to know that some one was suffering at his hands, and that still another was weighed down with grief wrought by his Satanic work; and this, in a measure, tended to calm the fierce passions of his breast, as he brooded over the recent defeat of his plans.

But, another subject was pressing on his mind. On this night he was to meet the tall African whom he had met in the forest path. And as he dwelt upon his interview with Cale Fez, his eagerness to know what secrets \$500 would buy became such that he resolved to see his would-be informant before the time appointed.

He acted on this resolution at once, and sent Dyke Rouel to the stables, to order out two horses.

"I can not wait," he mused aloud, striding to and fro on the piazza, with sullen face twice sullen in its deep frown. "I will hasten to town at once; draw the money from the bank. I will see Cale Fez; gain possession of the secrets that are to strengthen my hold on Mark Duval. I need those secrets. He has defied me—ah! yes; and I have struck a deadly blow in consequence! But, that does not win me Lorilyn. I must have her. I would sacrifice a hundred lives to get her! When I return, with the knowledge of additional stains on Mark Duval's life-page, perhaps then he'll yield. I will not be too hasty. I will not set the law bounds on his track yet. I'll wait—wait a day or two, and—"

"Here they are, maester," whined Dyke Rouel, at that moment approaching with the horses.

Vincent Carew vaulted into one of the saddles, and bade his follower do likewise.

"You want me to go 'long, maester?"

"Why, fool! who else did I want the other horse for?"

"Well, maester, I didn't know!" exclaimed Dyke, while he stammered and gloared in a foolish way.

"No more words. Follow me. Where did you leave the metal box?"

"Safe in the room, maester, beneath the bed I left it."

"Come on!"

Though determined to see Cale Fez at an hour much earlier than the African had fixed, Vincent Carew did not urge his horse beyond an easy pace, and, when about halfway to town, his reveries became of a deeply absorbing kind.

"What can have become of Lorilyn St. Clair?" he asked himself. "I did not see her to-day. She must be in her room. Ah! she seeks to avoid me. But I saw that rival of mine, curse him! He escaped me last night. I'll deal with him as I have with others at the mansion. The scorpion will soon end his career, and leave me master of the field. I pray the demons he may remain another twenty-four hours at Birdwood!"

He permitted the animal to walk; and, like a thin shadow, in his rear rode Dyke Rouel, silent and statue-like.

Suddenly Carew was aroused by the rumble of heavy wagon-wheels. Turning in his saddle, he recognized Cyp, the man of old jobs he had seen at the Oz.

The old negro was plying the whip, and trotting his horses at a break-neck rate. As he overtook and passed the two horsemen, he saluted them respectfully.

Not twenty yards ahead, Cyp took off his hat—in which he carried an apology for a handkerchief—to wipe the perspiration from his brow.

Carew, who was watching him, saw something flitter from the lining of the hat, and fall, unperceived, to the road.

Reaching the article, he saw it was a letter. Dismounting, he picked it up. To tear it open was an action characteristic. As he read, a dark scowl settled on his face, and an oath that was dire in blasphemy fell from his lips.

He had found the note dispatched by Oscar Storms to the clergyman.

"So!" he hissed, between tightly-locked teeth, and crushing the paper in his grasp, "they are at the tavern of the Oz, eh? A pretty plan they have to beat me! You thought to defy Vincent Carew, eh? Clench back along the road, as if to speed his mutterings to the ears of the couple who were waiting at the tavern."

He was interrupted by the sudden approach of Cyp. The negro had missed the letter, had left the wagon and retraced his course, feeling certain he could not have dropped it any great way back.

"Pardon, boss," he said, addressing Carew, "but, didn't you see nuffin of an envel'p' on de road 'round heyr?"

"Yes; I found it. I have it," replied Carew, eying him sharply.

"Yes, sah," doffing his hat and bowing. "Please giv' it to me, sah; I's in a big hurry, I is."

"I will give you ten dollars not to deliver the letter."

"Couldn't do it, nohow, boss. Hopes you'll give it to me, please."

"I shall not. Take ten dollars, and leave the errand undone."

Cyp opened his eyes, and was greatly embarrassed.

"Well, boss," he said, "s'pose, if you won't give it to me, I mus' go 'long 'thout it," and he added, to himself, as he turned away: "Guess I kin jes' sen' a preacher out, anyway—boss. Jerry said he wanted a preacher, an' it don't matter nuffin, nohow, who de preacher am—"

A heavy hand gripped him by the shoulder.

Carew had overheard his mummings.

"You black scoundrel! I'll give you one more chance to make ten dollars, and swear that you will not send a minister out to the Red Oz!"

As the darkey faced about, his eyes rolled, his ebou features were of ashy hue.

The frowning muzzle of a pistol touched his nose, and a face, red and distorted with passion, confronted him.

"Golly, boss! I-don't p'int that pistol at me!" he stammered, while his heart leaped to his throat.

"Will you do as I wish you to?" threateningly.

"Deed, sah, I can't. I mus' sen' de preacher—"

"Fool! I shall kill you!"

"Don't, mars'r! Take away de pistil!"

"Beware! will you obey me?"

"Deed I can't, mars'r; mus' do what boss Jerry—"

Bang! went the pistol—a bleeding corpse lay limp in the dust of the road, and Vincent Carew, lowering the smoking weapon, glared about him.

"Maester! Maester!" howled Dyke.

"Lordy! what 'ave you done?"

"Silence!"

"Oh!—oh!—we shall both be hanged!"

Carew sprung upon him, dragged him from his horse, and brought him kneeling to the ground, where he gripped him savagely by the throat.

"Now, dog! I swear to keep silence!" he forced through his gritting teeth. "Swear that you'll never betray me!—or, by Satan, I'll kill you, too! Swear!—Swear!"

"Maester! Maester! I'll never tell on you; indeed I won't—I swear I won't! Don't choke me!"

Carew released him. Then he took up the body of the murdered man, slung it across his shoulders, and ran into the woods on one side of the road—leaving Dyke Rouel trembling with fear.

Presently he returned and leaped into the saddle.

"Come on, Dyke!" he ordered, huskily; and the two dashed away at a furious gallop.

"The wagon," panted Dyke. "It'll tell on us, maester."

But the other heard him not. On, on they sped. As if pursued by the ghost of his victim, the murderer cast fearful glances behind him, and goaded his horse to madness.

Dyke Rouel, unusually pale and greatly terrified, was no less eager to escape from the scene of the bloody deed.

Vincent Carew experienced no difficulty in drawing the money at the bank—the check reading "to bearer." He lost no time, but stabled the horses and hastened to find Cale Fez.

When he stood before the Obi Man, the latter seemed displeased at the early call.

"How is this?" he asked. "Did I not say to come at night?"

"But, you did," admitted his visitor. "I have that to attend to which would not give me any other time than now."

"Come in," said Fez, after hesitating a moment.

He conducted them to the back room mentioned in a previous chapter.

Dyke Rouel no sooner set eyes on the hideous shapes upon the walls than his knees bent in a sudden terror, and he started to retreat. But he was collared by his master, who sent him, with a jerk and a push, across the room.

"Cale!" blurted Dyke, as he struck against the wall in a way that deprived him of breath; and then he whined: "Maester! Maester! you ain't a-going to stay here, are you? Goody! I'm scared to death; indeed, indeed I am! Look at the spiders!—and the snakes! See 'em! Don't let's stay here!"

"Be still!" commanded Carew, though he was, himself, not without a feeling of awe as he took in his strangely weird surroundings.

The room was without a window; the spattering candle burned its feeble light upon the table; a queer atmosphere greeted the lungs; and the Obi Man, with his peculiar mien, seemed an unearthly being in the midst of horrible things, standing there and contemplating them with the gaze of a stoic.

"Maester! don't let's stop here," whined Dyke again, his eyebrows elevating to the roots of his hair, his sallow countenance pale with fear, and his lank limbs bending beneath strain.

He took a step forward—trod on something soft, which emitted a squeal of pain; and the black cat darted, with a spat and a scratch, from under his feet.

Cale Fez touched a spring in the floor, causing the closet door to swing open with a rattle and a quiver.

Dyke uttered a scream as he saw the ghastly skeleton, and, for the second time, started to flee. But, again, Carew hurled him back.

"Cale Fez, what means this mummer?"

Have I entered a Satanic School, where souls are born again in picture? Are you a sorcerer? Of what unearthly craft is this den sprung?"

The Obi Man looked hard in the face of the speaker, but, to his exclamations, made no reply.

The sensations experienced by Carew were growing more and more unpleasant.

The glittering eyes of the African seemed piercing to his heart's core. Under that glance a magnetic influence was creeping upon him; his gaze was held riveted; he grew nervous.

"Speak!" he cried. "Am I in some devilish tomb, and in the power of another Hertzog?"

"Maester!—oh! let's go!"

"Silence, Dyke Rouel!"

"I have much to say to you," said Fez, at last. "Sit down."

He placed chairs for them. They seated themselves, and waited in awe.

Dyke glanced, at rapid intervals, over his shoulder toward the closet wherein was the chalky skeleton, as though he feared that the fleshless hands would grasp him unawares; and he moved from side to side in his seat, watching the African and his master, alternately, while he shivered and shook as with a chill.

"You have come to buy my secrets?"

Cale Fez took a position directly in front of Carew.

"Yes; and I've brought the money to pay for them."

"I will tell you much of the man known

as Karl Kurtz," he said, his eyes brightening at the other's mention of money.

"His real name is Mark Duval."

"No, it is not. He has still another."

"Ha! Another?"

"His true name is Robert St. Clair."

"Robert St. Clair!" repeated Carew, in astonishment.

"I say, maester," interrupted Dyke, his whole body trembling, "don't let's stay here! We'll both be killed—I know we will!"

Vincent Carew was in no mood to brook interference on the part of his follower.

The words of the Obi man had had the effect of rousing an intense interest, while they scared and mystified him.

"Dyke! Rouel, be still, or I shall kick you!" he exclaimed; and then to Cale Fez: "How do you know this?"

"I will tell you—when you have paid me," meaningly.

Vincent Carew hastily counted out five hundred dollars, and handed it over.

"Now proceed. Be quick; for I would be out of this place—"

"Let's go right away, maester! Oh! Oh!"

"Dyke Rouel!" he started up, and glowered fiercely at his follower.

CHAPTER XVIII.

OSCAR STORMS and Lorilyn were impatiently awaiting the arrival of the clergyman.

As the reader knows, she had taken this step in order to make a marriage with Vincent Carew an impossibility, and to avoid the persecuting threats of the man she despised and who, she felt convinced, was her half-brother.

As the wife of Oscar Storms she would be safe; nothing could force her to that upon which she justly looked in shrinking horror, while she would not breathe to the arch villain the fact of a relationship so abhorred by her.

She did not cherish that feeling toward the man she was about to wed which imparts to love its garb of bliss; there was no passionate, responsive ardor in the bosom of this proud, cold, beautiful girl; the marriage she would enter into was but a course of safety from an evil which well might chill her veins with dread.

She felt at ease as they waited through the hours; fearing that Vincent Carew, alert and watchful of their movements, might find a means to ruin her plans.

"How long will it be, Oscar," she asked, "before the clergyman arrives?"

"If the negro executes his errand well, the one who is to unite us should be here by half-past five, at the furthest."

"What time is it now?"

"Three o'clock," consulting his watch; and he continued: "Be patient, darling. I am no less anxious than you; yet, I can wait. We will soon be husband and wife. Oh, Lorilyn! this is indeed a blessed day for me!"

She shuddered in the embrace of this ardent, manly lover. And why not love him in the same spirit? Woman could not find a nobler specimen of manhood than he, upon whom to bestow her affection! Handsome, in honor unsullied; wealthy; of proud lineage, sincere in motive; it was a strange nature to withstand all these!

The hours passed slowly. When five o'clock drew nigh, Oscar went to the window, to see if he could discover the expected minister on the road. But not a soul was in sight, and he returned to the side of his betrothed.

Another hour. The sun was sinking low in the west, and yet the minister came not.

"Patience, darling," he said, as he saw that Lorilyn's uneasiness momentarily increased. "He will soon be here, now."

Even as he spoke, they heard the clatter of horse hoofs in the distance.

Again, Oscar crossed over to the window, and looked out.

Far up the road was a cloud of dust, and in the center of the cloud was a horseman. Horse and rider were nearing the Oz at terrific speed—the beast thundering along on a full run, under whip and spur.

As he approached he uttered a loud, long halloo.

The men in the bar-room rushed out to ascertain the cause of the disturbance, and then, as the rider halted in their midst, Oscar heard him say, or rather yell:

"There's been a murder on the road!—a murder!"

Oscar Storms bounded down the stairs, and hastened out. A deep suspicion had fastened in his mind. Forcing his way through the group, he cried:

"You say there's been a murder on the road?"

"Yes!" panted the man, "a bloody murder!"

"Oh, the devil!—the devil!" groaned Jerry. "Me ould tavern's ruined intirely. Nobody'll come this way over the road any more, at all!"

"Was it a white man, or a black man?" interrogated Oscar.

All leaned eagerly forward to hear the answer. It was a question the others had not thought to ask in the excitement which followed the arrival of the news.

"It's old Cyp, the nigger. We found his wagon standing, and saw some blood on the ground, and, when we followed up the blood—thinking all wasn't right, you see—we found the nigger under a pile of brush, with a hole cix through his head. Me and Jim Zix found him—Jim from over by the meadow, you know—and Jim's gone after the sheriff, a mile back, to fetch him down here—"

He was interrupted by a shout from Jerry.

"Who was it, ye say?"

"It was old Cyp," repeated the man.

Oscar did not wait to hear more. The delay of the clergyman was explained. His letter had never been delivered.

Leaving the excited men to discuss the affair, he hastened back to Lorilyn—just as the carriage from Birdwood drew up before the door.

"Come, Lorilyn, we must return. Our marriage must be postponed."

"What did I hear that man say, Oscar?—something about a murder, wasn't it?"

"Yes. The negro we dispatched to town never delivered our message—he was foully murdered on the road!"

Lorilyn recoiled in horror.

"Come," he added; "the carriage is waiting for us."

As they were driven away from the Oz, Oscar mused, half aloud, while he gazed thoughtfully at the cushions before him:

"It is strange that the negro should have been intercepted—very strange."

"Not strange, Oscar," said Lorilyn, in a scarce-audible whisper, and laying a hand upon his arm.

"What do you mean?"

"Ah! Lorilyn—what mean you?"

"Can you think of no one who would wish to prevent our marriage?" in the same hushed voice.

"Yes"—after a moment; "Vincent Carew is my rival."

"And, from my window, I saw him and his servant start away from Birdwood shortly before we did."

Saturday Journal

Published every Monday morning at nine o'clock.

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Albert W. Aiken's New Serial.

We will give, in an early number, the first chapters of Mr. Aiken's great story of Life Among the New England Looms, viz.:

A STRANGE GIRL.

Brilliant, graphic, intense, the author strikes a singularly new and original line of characters; and in a plot at once

Ingenious, Subtle and Luminous, gives us pictures of Heart and Home Life that are like revelations. The great New England Mill, with its hundreds of workers, thinkers and varied life, is the center, around which is woven the

Warp and Woof of the Author's Web, which, in several respects, is one of Mr. Aiken's happiest conceptions, to which lovers of American Romance will give a rousing "benefit."

Our Arm-Chair.

Pro Bono Publico.—That the frightful disease, Cancer, can be cured, the following communication just at hand, would seem to attest:

"I wish to tell how I cured my cancer without pain or money. Eight years ago a cancer came on my nose. It grew very fast for several years, but the last two it grew very slow and became frightful, and began to eat out my left eye. I had paid hundreds of dollars, and tried doctors far and near without relief. Finally I began to drink wild tea, putting the warm steeped tea-grounds on my cancer. In six weeks my cancer was cured. I am sixty-two years old. I have told this remedy to several of my friends, and know of two that have been cured since. I believe wild tea grows over the country, generally on high land.

"CHARLES YARLEY, Pittsburg, Pa."

We have heard of this remedy; and believing in the principle of "doing the utmost good to all men," we here repeat the recipe, hoping its currency will prove a source of comfort to those suffering from this terrible disease.

How Others See Us.—Some of our exchanges are doing much to increase our circulation, for which we heartily thank them. One says:

"If people must have light reading let them get the best. Take all in all, the SATURDAY JOURNAL we regard as the best of the story and romance weeklies. It appears to have a very select corps of writers, and is a beautiful paper as to 'get up'—which can't be said of some others of the story weeklies."

Sorry we have lost the credit to this opinion. It shows that the editor has an opinion, and is not afraid to express it.

The *Nokomis Herald* has this: "The New York *Saturday Journal* improves with every number and contains serials by our best authors, not of the 'blood and thunder' order, but embodiments of real life. Try it for a year."

"Not of the blood and thunder order." That expresses it exactly. We have no ambition to excel in that line. "Hold the Mirror up to Nature" is the motto of our writers.

These two notices we repeat because they do properly characterize this paper. It is our wish never to be associated with blood and thunder on the one hand, or with the sickly sentimental on the other. We aim at what is strong, spirited, original and American.

PROCRUSTINATION.

Has it not often been a wonder to you why it is we are so procrastinating in those things which we ought to do? We are continually putting off our duties, thinking that there will be time enough in the future to attend to them. We leave home and promise the dear and loved ones we will certainly write to tell them of our welfare, but when we get among new scenes and new acquaintances, we let day follow day, saying to ourselves: "Well, we will certainly send a missive home to-morrow." The morrow comes, and with it comes new pleasures, and the promise made is again broken. Thus the days lengthen into weeks, and the anxious ones at home feel many a bitter pang. May be they think others have supplanted their love, or they may be in a worried state, fearing that some accident has befallen us.

It is not only to give pleasure to the loving hearts that we should write—and write frequently—it is our duty to do so. If it be but a line, we should send it. But if we procrastinate and put off from day to week and week to month, it is ten chances to one if we ever write at all. And you can find time enough to indite a missive if you desire to. There's the half-hour from your dinner that you often spend in idle talking. Would it not be better to use those precious moments in converse—through pen, ink and paper—with the waiting, watching, and praying ones at home?

Letters are the golden chain that links our hearts together. Surely a few words are not much to ask, when they will bring such a plentiful reward; so, when you think of the loved ones, do not procrastinate to send them your letters.

Procrastinators are never happy objects to contemplate, and they are never happy themselves; they put off doing this and doing that, until they are fairly—perhaps unfairly—were a more appropriate word—bowed down under an accumulation of duties, which should have been done, and then they scarcely know at which end to commence, and so continue to procrastinate.

"I will do so and so, by-and-by," you say. Did you ever think the by-and-by might never come? You may be ill, or other things may happen to you. If we perform our duties now, we shall not have to blame ourselves in the future. F. S. F.

"DO THY LITTLE, DO IT WELL."

No matter what may be your employment, be it ever so little and humble, take interest enough in it to see that you do it well. There is never the slightest gain in shirking work, or to think, because it seems to be trifling, that it is of no use to be over nice in doing it. If you only have the wrappers of a newspaper to direct, do it in a clear and legible hand, and do not scrawl over the paper as though you were above such employment, and desired to get rid of it as speedily as possible. You'll never make a man of yourself if you do.

It is by attention to little things that we attain to greater ones.

The needle, although a useful article, is comparatively an insignificant one, yet notice how many different hands it passes through ere it arrives at a state of perfection. Each one's work on the same is simple yet important, and were one of the workmen to shirk his duties, the result would be decided failure.

Notice the hair-spring of a watch, the most unimportant part of the entire time-piece, seemingly; let that get out of order and you will be at a loss to know the hour of the day. And, looking upon the matter in a business light, these small things "pay" ten out of a dozen times, in the race with the larger ones. Had any one told you that, by attaching a bit of elastic to a common wooden ball, and getting a patent upon the same, would bring money to a man, you would have laughed at the idea, yet the maker of the "Return Ball" amassed quite a snug little fortune.

Manufacturing candy to sell at five cents a stick does not seem to be on the road to fortune, but it has proved so. A few years ago might be noticed a young man, in front of the Boston post-office, peddling his candy in winter's cold and summer's heat. Next we heard of him as the owner of a factory for the production of his celebrated candy and the owner of a most beautiful residence in Cambridge. Although there may be a secret as to the composition of his candy, there is no secret about his success. He did his little well, and crept before he strove to climb. Failures ensue in this world because we neglect little things to reach after the greater, and then we murmur because we do not succeed in gaining them. EVE LAWLESS.

Foolscap Papers.

Discoveries of Dr. Livingstone.

Ugji, Nov. 1871.

FRIEND WHITEHORN:—A greater discovery than Mr. Stanley's discovery of me is my discovery of the source of the river Nile, which is not only the source of the Nile but it has been the source of a good deal of trouble to many travelers. I have described it in former letters.

It is my intention to take it up and deposit it in the British Museum at some future day, so that everybody will have a chance to see the world's great wonder. The only trouble will be that England may be inundated by it.

The Nile is a curious river. At some places it is three miles wide and fifteen feet deep by actual measurement, and at other places I found it to be three miles deep and fifteen feet wide, as it had been set up on edge by some malicious person unknown to the authorities. At some places the river reaches twenty-five feet above its banks, and poles have to be braced against it to prevent it toppling over and flooding the lands. Once in a while it crosses a chasm, fifteen hundred feet deep and a mile wide, on ropes and poles stretched over for the purpose.

There are no falls in the river, as it runs up hill, and it is a very common sight to see it ascend a precipice, six hundred feet high, and cross mountains with the utmost facility.

It is so crooked that if you should attempt to jump across it you would alight on the same side you started from, and it often makes a complete circle and crosses itself.

No bridges are required, for, wherever a road crosses, the river shoots up in the air in the form of a bow and the caravans go under it, dry shod.

The water is not at all wet, and should you happen to fall into it, you might get a little dusty, and that is all; you can brush it all off with a broom. The fish wear linen coats the year round, and never have any occasion to wrap themselves up in blankets or put on yarn stockings. Mermaids are found in the Nile in great abundance, and it is the finest sport in the world to sit on the banks and catch them with a pin-hook; you can catch a stringful in a few minutes if you are not the homeliest man in the world.

The water of Lake Tanganyika is pure lemonade. There are whales in it four hundred feet in length; and they are used as conveyances for travelers from one port to the other. You show your ticket, walk down the whale's throat into a finely finished cabin, carpeted and with excellent state-rooms, and coal oil lamps hanging from the ceiling. When it is time for it to start, the whale blows his whistle, and off you go at the rate of sixty miles an hour. If you prefer, you can ride out on deck. This is a very safe way of traveling, and in all my experience with them I never knew one of them to blow up. I should like to see them in operation on the Atlantic.

The mountains of Kalinga are the highest on the globe. The moon ran against one of the lower peaks once, and broke one of its horns off. The tops are far out of sight. I climbed to the top of the highest, and from there I could see all over the world. The moon passed some distance below me, and I could plainly see the inhabitants at dinner. They looked up at me in surprise, and waved their napkins and asked me if I wouldn't like to jump aboard and take a ride. I didn't have time to reply. I noticed that all the fences in the moon were many miles high, and on inquiry, found it was the richness of the soil that started the fence-posts to growing.

Near here is a field of large diamonds, which are so plentiful that the ignorant people use them for foundations to their houses. I threw away all my provisions and got a four-hundred-pounder on my back and carried it some miles, but gave out and threw it by. I would have given it for a square meal if it would have bought it.

In the interior I discovered a race of people who were so tall (owing to the soil which they lived on) that they were obliged to climb up a ladder to blow their noses. They take an ox in one hand and eat him up alive. One of them walked over me once without seeing me, and stubbed his toe against me and I went three miles a-flying. That was the worst kick I ever luxuriated in.

Delicious fruit I discovered in abundance. The pine trees were laden with sweet pine apples; the pear trees were breaking down with ripe pears; on the crab-apple trees hung great clusters of mellow soft-shell crabs; the boot trees were full of boots just beginning to turn red at the tops; the lime trees were white with bunches of lime, unslacked; the bread-fruit trees bent under their load of bread, in large and small-sized loaves and light biseuit; the apricot trees were full of delicious apes; the plum trees were covered with ripe plum-bobs and plumbagoes; the date tree was never out of date; and the fruitful plane tree was full of luscious carpenter's planes, and inclined planes.

One day, while going through the jungles, I heard people talking. They proved to be a crowd of gorillas. The head man came and shook hands with me, and had many questions to ask about Dr. Darwin, who, he said, was the patron saint of his tribe, which revered him for putting them on a proper footing with their stuck-up relations. He said some of the Darwin family were still among them. When I departed they gave me three cheers and a tiger.

But I discover that it is time for me to close. As Stanley is already at lunch, my chance for any thing to eat will be small if I do not hurry. Yours truthfully, LIVINGSTONE.

Woman's World.

The Well-bred Woman.—Outward Graces and Inward Virtues.—The Growth of Opulence.—Full Openings.—Ready-made Garments for Women.

NEATNESS, tidiness and cleanliness are distinguishing marks of the well-bred lady or gentleman, but there is an overfastidiousness about these minor points of good-breeding which as certainly betrays the snob as gilt jewelry and flashy cravats, and glaring-colored kids. Your would-be lady keeps her hands neat, her nails in exquisite order, her hair and teeth in a condition that would not offend the most fastidious. Her shoes are never unbuckled or carelessly laced, her dress is guileless of dust, or grease-spots, or wine or tea-stains. Her lingerie is spotless, her sitting-room is never in disorder, her dressing-room exceeds every other spot about her house in cleanliness and tidiness, and in all this she is a lady; but she never perceives the fact that she has mistaken the external grace for the inward virtue. She sneers at her poor cousin who wears shabby gowns and untidy boots and gloves, and who makes feeble and futile attempts at keeping up an appearance. She fears the poor girl will obtrude herself at her next reception in that old rusty alpaca dress, and linen collar which was evidently laundered at home by her own toil-marked hands.

She forgets, or rather she has never learned, that the true lady is ever the most intensely, but quietly, independent of human beings—at feeling an inward consciousness of true ladyhood, and knowing her position to be unquestioned by people of good-breeding and good sense, she is not ashamed to walk the street with the poorest-dressed woman in town, nor afraid to invite the shabby gentility of reduced ladyhood to her entertainments. She never calls attention to her own personal neatness or the order and tidiness which reigns in her home. She does not essay to instruct others how they shall brush their teeth, or take their bath, or eat their eggs, or sip their coffee.

These are the externals which, having been attended to, and known from childhood, she wears as easily as she does her Veuve Jouvyn kids; and which she never permits to intrude themselves into her conversation, as an annoyance to her friends, who are supposed at least to know them as perfectly as she does herself.

During the last few weeks there has been a flutter and commotion in the Woman's World of New York, such as occurs at the commencement of each season.

The Openings of the dry goods houses, millinery and dressmaking establishments, and fancy stores, have drawn thousands of eager butterflies and bees, who come to admire and purchase, or note and record the onward march of opulence and luxury in our great city; evoked as much by the increase of the dry goods and fancy trade, and the importation of costly robes from the fashion marts of the Old World, as in any other branch of commerce. This year it is estimated that between five thousand and seven thousand costly dresses will be ordered, and sold to customers of the four leading large dry goods houses of New York—the four which are generally known as the "merchant princes"—establishments. These five or seven thousand dresses will be those only that cost from \$200 to \$2000 apiece. Five times that number of ready-made and ordered suits will be sold at a cost of from \$30 to \$150 each. These figures are supposed to be a very modest estimate; but they give us some idea of the growth of wealth in our city, and of the importance of the *wearer* (I say *wearer*) of the trade and commerce of our great metropolis.

This year witnesses a great accession to the trade in ready-made garments for women and children. There is no earthly reason why women should not be clad in the dresses and underclothing "manufactured for the trade." Men's clothing and underwear is a splendidly successful branch of business in all commercial communities; why should not the women of the land dress in habiliments to be had at the store?

The continued and increasing lack of good dressmakers is an argument not to be resisted, and for this reason many people are now buying the ready-made garment in preference to undergoing the tribulation of buying the goods and having the dress made up. Women are crying out for this and that "right" when it is a fact that every city, town and village in the land is crying out for good and competent dress-makers. The desire to live a "lady-like" life is doing dreadful work with women; and, as a consequence, we shall see men coming in strong handed to carry on the business, which ought to be wholly woman's own.

The fall supply of woman's wear is very large. Dresses ready made can now be had of almost any style, material or price.

Made up in large establishments, with the system, skill and economy which spring from combined labor, these dresses are cheaper than if made up by the ordinary dressmaker, and are, usually, more stylish. We shall, therefore, see a more general appreciation of store garments, and a falling off of dependants on the indifferent dress-maker; and in a few years more we shall have, as a feature of every business town, stores devoted to the sale of ready-made clothing for women, girls and children. EMILY CHILDREN.

Short Stories from History.

Shipwreck on the Coast.—The late disasters at sea give a melancholy interest to the theme. The loss of the *Bienville*—the foundering of the *Metis*—the burning of the *America*—are yet subjects of mournful comment. One of the most awful calamities which ever happened on the Atlantic coast was the loss of the transport *Harpooner* off the coast of Newfoundland, November 10th, 1818. Having on board three hundred and eighty-five men, women and children, she grounded on the St. John's reef, in the darkness of a tempestuous night, and soon lay a helpless wreck, the great seas washing over her. After the masts were cut away and the loss of a portion of the crew, she drifted over near the high rocks toward the main. In this situation every one became terrified; the suddenness of the sea rushing in carried away the berths and stanchions between decks, when men, women and children were drowned, and many were killed by the force with which they were driven against the loose baggage, casks, and slaves which floated below. All that possibly could get upon deck; but from the crowd and confusion that prevailed, the orders of the officers and master to the soldiers and seamen were unavailing; death staring every one in the face; the ship striking on the rocks as though she would instantly upset. The shrieking and pressing of the people to the starboard side was so violent that several were much hurt. About eleven o'clock the boats on the deck were washed overboard by a heavy sea; but even from the commencement of the disaster, the hopes of any individual being saved were but very small.

From this time, until four o'clock the next morning, all on the wreck were anxiously praying for the light to break upon them. The boat from the stern was in the mean while lowered, when the first mate and four seamen, at the risk of their lives, pushed off to the shore. They with difficulty effected a landing upon the mainland, behind a high rock, nearest to where the stern of the vessel had been driven. The log-line was thrown from the wreck, with a hope that they might lay hold of it, but darkness, and the tremendous surf that beat, rendered it impracticable. During this awful time of suspense, the possibility of sending a line to them by a dog occurred to the master: the animal was brought aft, and thrown into the sea with a line tied round his middle, and with it he swam toward the rock upon which the mate and seamen were standing. It is impossible to describe the sensations which were excited at seeing this faithful dog struggling with the waves, and on reaching the summit of the rock, repeatedly dashed back again by the surf into the sea; until at length, by unceasing exertions, he effected a landing. One end of the line being on board, a stronger rope was hauled and fastened to the rock.

At about six o'clock in the morning of the 11th, the first person was landed by this means; and afterward, by an improvement in rigging the rope, and placing each individual in slings, they were with greater facility extricated from the wreck; but during the passage thither it was with the utmost difficulty that the unfortunate sufferers could maintain their hold, as the sea beat over them; some were dragged to the shore in a state of insensibility. Lieutenant Wilson was lost, being unable to hold on the rope with his hands; he was twice struck by the sea, fell backward out of the slings, and after swimming for a considerable time among the floating wreck, by which he was struck on the head, he perished. Many who threw themselves overboard, trusting for their safety to swimming, were lost; they were dashed to pieces by the surf on the rocks, or by the floating fragments of the wreck.

The rope at length, by constant working, and by swinging across the sharp rock, was cut in two; there being no means of replacing it, the spectacle became more than ever terrific; the sea beating over the wreck with great violence, washed numbers overboard; and at last the wreck breaking up at the stern from midships and forecastle, precipitated all that remained into one common destruction.

It is difficult to paint the horror of the scene. Children clinging to their parents for help; parents themselves struggling with death, and stretching out their feeble arms to save their children, dying within their grasp.

The total number of persons lost was two hundred and eight, and one hundred and seventy-seven were saved.

Adventures by Land and Sea!

For our "fall campaign" we have a multitude of novelties, among which we may mention

A New Series of Camp-fire Yarns,

By the noted RALPH RINGWOOD.

Forecastle Yarns and Sea Sketches, By C. D. CLARK, author of "Among the Thousand Isles."

ON THE PRAIRIE;

OR, THE ADVENTURES OF AMATEUR HUNTERS. By JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.

BORDER REMINISCENCES,

By CAPT. J. F. C. ADAMS: all of which are in hand. This is a rare succession of captivating papers on captivating themes by captivating writers—such as no other popular weekly will presume to present.

The lamented Ralph Ringwood (the late Captain A. D. Hines) had finished up for us, just prior to his untimely decease, this most characteristic series of his inimitable Camp-fire stories, and we shall present them as part of our Fall feast of good things.

The other contributions, as will be inferred by their titles and authors' names, are particularly graphic and "taking," and with our various other literary features make a most promising programme for the coming months.

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future orders.—Unavailable MSS. promptly returned only when stamps accompany the inclosure, for such return.—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MS."—MSS., which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MS.; as "copy," third, length. Of very MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note this paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, leaving off each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its full or page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS., unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find an ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Correspondents must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

We shall have to decline—"My Cousin and I," "The Leap-year Party," "The Thousand Games," "My School Days," "The Last Great Success," "Robinson Crusoe," "A Star," "The First Pumpkin Pie," "Howard, the Benefactor," "A Child's Whim," "Six Days too Late," "The Bobbery Glen," "A Hawk of Society," "Where is She Now?" "A Foreign Sheep in Wolves' Clothes," "Stansbury Ford."

We will give place—"Phantasy," "Emmer Hardy's Love," "A Sign," "The Graces," "My Pleiad," "Living for Him," "Rose Benson's Rose."

A. B. C. We can not write. Look for answers in this column.

HENRY C. G. The author named writes exclusively for this paper.

PHILLOS. Write to Secretary of N. Y. Academy of Design for information.

CALVERT. Mrs. Anna Cora Mowatt is dead. She was Mrs. Ritchie when she died.

ANNA M. A singer can not get engagements as you seem to infer.

M. T. D. We know not if the gentleman referred to is married or single.

CHARLES VAN TREVET. Amadeus is King of Spain by virtue of his election by the Spanish Cortes.

J. R. We suppose an ointment of sulphur, or blue ointment, or carbolic acid will cure the fleas-worms trouble.

REAR EXETER. Chronic catarrh is very hard to cure. The best remedy is twice or three daily to syringe the nose with a slight infusion of gentian; or with a weak solution of carbolic acid. We can not indicate the week when the story named will commence.

MIKE D. We have no idea who has come nearest to obtaining perpetual motion. Josh Billings says a woman's tongue is the nearest approach to it.

JOHN. We do not know how to answer your question. It is the most practical approach to perpetual motion yet effected.

WILLIAM. Roman Catholics are forbidden by their church authorities to believe in the doctrine of other than such as their own church sanctions; and the church is inimical to the Masons and Odd Fellows, we believe. The Democratic and Republican parties, as now distinguished, had no existence in Jefferson's time. In his day Democrats were called Republicans, and the opposition were known as "Federalists," or "Democrats." It is not known in Jefferson's time, when the opposition were known as Whigs. The present Republican party originated in the opposition to schemes for making Kansas a slave State, and took form and shape in 1856.

GEORGE. We can give you no better recipe for gaining flesh than to eat nutritious food, take proper daily exercise and avoid all excess of wine and hours. We know nothing of the musical box for one dollar.

GEORGE. Aphron Behn's writings are too indecent for modern tastes. Her novels, which are now popular, in Addison's time, shows that decency was not the rule in the drama. A very expensive edition of her books is now being issued, and a few persons indeed will care to possess the volumes.

MARY CLAYTON. This was the *nom de plume* of the late Mrs. Caroline A. Keeland, we believe. The lady was more popular as an educator than as an author, as may also be said of Mrs. Emma Willard.

BARON. Yes, the Prince of Wales comes of every thing but "good stock," on his mother's side. He is a perfect picture of the Georges and has similar tastes. George I. died of drunkenness and debauchery; George II. of rage, for each success of George III. was a madman or a fool, it is hard to say which; George IV. was a common libertine, and died early, of his vice; George V. was a common scoundrel, and died early, of his vice; George VI. will be reversing the usual order of things for his lineage.

CANONICAL. The festival of the "Visitation of the Blessed Virgin" is one of those ordinances of the Roman Church which are observed and observed in that church. It was instituted by Pope Urban VI. in commemoration of the journey which the Virgin Mary took to the hill country of Judea, in order to visit her cousin Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist. The feast was instituted in 1389, and confirmed at the Council of Trent. It is a solemnity, might by her intercession reconcile her Son, who is now angry for the sins of men, and that she might grant peace and amity among the faithful.

JOCKEY. If you ever see a horse so frightened at a fire that it is impossible to drive him from the stable, merely harness or saddle him as if for work, and you can lead him out without difficulty.

GHOSH. To ascertain the age of a horse is quite simple, after once understanding the signs. After a horse has passed his fourth year, for each succeeding year a wrinkle comes on the upper corner of the lower eyelid. If the horse has three wrinkles, he is twelve years of age. If the age of nine you determine his age by his teeth.

M. F. G. You can raise the surface of velvet by warming a flat-iron moderately; cover it with a wet cloth and hold it over the velvet, so that the vapor arising therefrom will raise the plush of the velvet with the use of a wash water.

FARMER. A sure protection for vines and fruit trees against insects, is to mix six drachms of carbolic acid in one gallon of water, and to spray the titles in the same proportion. Then throw over the vines and trees by a vapor-ejector.

MARGARET. A bouquet of flowers can be kept fresh for some days by dropping a teaspoonful of powdered charcoal into the water in which the flower-stems are placed.

GEORGE WEST. Add a few cloves to your ink and it will not become moldy, but be greatly improved.

HOUSEWIFE. A good substitute for cream in coffee is to beat up the white of an egg to a froth; add to it a small lump of butter, and gradually pour in the coffee.

DARBYMAN. You must give your cows the greatest care or they will fail you. To make them give a rich yield of good milk, give them three times a day water that is slightly warm, and mix with it in, and put in bran to the amount of one quart to two gallons of water. An ordinary pail full morn, noon and night.

STUDENT. China has the greatest number of large cities of any country in the world. Those most populous are Loowoo, with 2,000,000 inhabitants; Peking, 1,648,814; Canton, 1,386,000; Hankow, 800,000; Foochow, 600,000; Ningpo, 400,000; Shanghai, 365,000.

SUPPERER. The best cure we have ever heard of for a bone pain, is to take a can of kerosene and stir it into air slacked lime until it is of the consistency of putty; then make a leather thimble, fill it with the composition and insert the following finger.

MORSEY complains that the water is so soft through her shoes, and asks for a recipe to prevent it. First, wear shoes that have no holes in them, and then take half a pint of "drying oil," and add to it one ounce of turpentine, and half an ounce of Burgundy pitch; mix these carefully together over a slow fire, and lay the mixture over the shoe leather with a sponge or soft brush, and repeat the operation until the leather will hold no more. Then the shoes must be put away until perfectly dry.

COACHMAN. We have seen a very effective cure for balky horses. Suppose you try with yours, viz.: take the horse and whist him round and round in a circle until he becomes dizzy. One dose will cure most horses, two doses very stubborn ones, and three doses of the whist will start any equine off. Let one person seize him by the head another by the tail to administer well the dose.

RABBIT. You can crystallize your own glass doors by dissolving opium salts in hot acid and rubbing it over the panes of glass; the glass can then be bordered or ornamented by using a wet cloth.

MARKETMAN. Preserve your eggs from a change of temperature by covering them with a solution of gun arabic; let them dry, and then pack in dry charcoal dust.

INVALID. The easiest way to get rid of warts is to pull off the thickened skin until you draw blood, and then rub the places over thoroughly with *lunar caustic*; repeat several times.

Unanswered questions on hand will appear next week.

A SIGH.

BY LUCIUS C. GREENWOOD.

Birds to sunny realms are flying,
Leaves from trees fall trembling, dying;
I am here alone and sighing,
Sighing sad for thee.

Years ago we stood together
In the golden autumn weather,
Here amid the fading leaves,
Now I pine for thee.

Years ago, oh all was gladness,
But years came and turned to sadness;
Years will come and bring me madness,
While I mourn for thee.

Stars the same are brightly shining;
Clouds are gemmed with moonlight lining;
Vines to trees the same are twining,
But thou not to me.

Long has vanished that fair vision
When we hoped through dreams Elysian;
Ere Time passed his cold decision,
Parting thee from me.

Lonely in the Autumn weather
I am straying through the heather,
Hoping, ere the leaflets wither,
I may be with thee.

Pearls and Plumstones.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"To be sure I need somebody, Mr. Eccles! As if one pair of hands could do every thing that's to be done in this house. Dear knows, I think I earn my salt doing the washing, and ironing, and baking, and sweeping, and sewing, and cooking and—"

Mrs. Eccles' rapid enunciations were suddenly interrupted by a laugh, loud and hearty, from her husband.

"Bless my soul, Hulda, you've got your lesson well on your tongue's end! Smart, are you? Why, I think you're just the smartest little woman for many a mile, and it's because I think you're entirely too much to do this summer that I asked you if you didn't want me to hire somebody to help you. There's Beldy Jackson or Minny Jones."

Mrs. Eccles held up both her floury hands in a gesture of supremest contempt that her words indorsed.

"Beldy Jackson! Minny Jones! Do you think I'd have either of them baggages in the house, with their simpers and giggles, their curls and their airs—our Ned just home for his vacation? No, sir, Mr. Eccles."

And the good woman plunged into her kneading-rough again, leaving Mr. Eccles to solve the still open question.

"I tell you what it is, Hulda—I've hit the nail on the head this time, I guess. I wonder if sister Mary's Jessamine wouldn't suit to a T?"

Mrs. Eccles' rapid hands never faltered in their busy work, but she turned her face around to her husband in a way that meant pleased surprise.

"Sure enough! Jessamine's our own flesh and blood, too, as you might say, and we could trust her; and Ned there, wouldn't dare make love to his cousin."

Farmer Eccles laughed softly.

"Ned seems to worry you, mother. I'm sure the boy's got to get married some time or other, and Jessamine Mere would suit me for a daughter-in-law as well as anybody."

A large, shady front yard, with white-washed stones arranged regularly on the edge of the grass; an old-fashioned border of lady-slippers, petunias and sweet allium relieved by green-painted boxes of huge pink peonies; a rope swing depending from a far-reaching bough of one of the elm trees, and Jessamine Mere sitting therein, with one dainty slippered foot propping her light weight.

How very pretty she was; her slightly-tanned skin that only made her cheeks deeper in their carnation hue; her mouth so full and red, that was constantly displaying the even, white teeth; her saucy eyes, so bright and spirited, with their drooping, long-lashed lids; and her short, wavy hair, with a narrow blue bow coquettishly nestling in it.

Ned Eccles leaned against the elm tree trunk watching her; a tall, unbrowned fellow, with a gravity unusually found in young men of twenty-five; but then, handsome, reticent Edward Eccles was studying at Rutgers, for the ministry, to the delight of his parents and the admiration of the young girls.

Now, on his summer vacation, Ned was doing something—nay, had done something very singular for a student, so far from graduation, to do; yet a very natural thing for a young man to do when he was thrown constantly in the society of a young, pretty girl like Jessamine Mere.

So, standing under the elm tree, watching her closely, Ned Eccles made up his mind that he really loved his witching cousin, and would make her his wife, if she was willing, and she was not already promised to that young Dr. Anderson, who rode out from New York every Sunday afternoon to see her.

"Jessamine!" and he suddenly walked over to her side as he spoke her name. "I was thinking of something; shall I tell you what it was?"

She arched her graceful head coquettishly.

"Oh, Ned, of course you must tell me! I shall be so interested in any of your secrets."

She flashed him a smile that would have brought Dr. Anderson straight to his knees, if the grass happened to be dry, and he hadn't on his best white pants. But Ned Eccles only caressed the small brown hand that held the rope of the swing, and bent his noble head a little nearer her sweet, saucy face.

"I hope you will be so deeply interested as to say you will be my wife, Jessamine! I love you very much; I could not attempt to tell you, but if you will let me prove it constantly by a lifetime of devotion, I shall feel I am the happiest man alive."

How strangely solemn it sounded; how his voice trembled with tenderness; how softly the summer breeze sang over their heads; how quiet and watchful for her answer the countryside seemed!

She stole a glance at his face; and an awe, born of the truest, deepest love that can stir the depths of a woman's heart, was in her face and voice as she gave her hand to him.

"Oh, Ned! I am not worthy of you! but if you will be content with me, and—"

"Content with you, my darling!"

And he interrupted her by a sudden, passionate kiss, as he spoke.

So, when Mrs. Eccles came to the kitchen door to call Jessamine to set the

tea-table, there was a betrothal-ring on her brown, taper finger; a gold band, with a pink-white pearl in the center.

"There's not the least use in your fretting about it, Ned. If you wasn't so infatuated, you'd see as I see, and as every one else sees, Jessamine's only flirting with you—it's as plain as the nose on your face. And she does intend marrying that Doctor Anderson."

Ned Eccles' face was very white and full of pain as he listened to his mother's words, the while watching Jessamine's graceful motions as she was working in the kitchen.

She was busy preserving plums, and Ned, with an aching heart, wondered whether, after all, she ever would do it another summer for him to eat.

He had been dreaming such delicious dreams these past few weeks; and it was only very lately that any clouds had arisen to darken the landscape; and the clouds had, at last, taken distinct form, and the form was Doctor Anderson.

He had been coming regularly all this time since Ned's engagement with Jessamine; but since Jessamine herself assured Ned he was only a real dear friend, Ned had tried not to think of the good-looking young doctor. But now, when Mrs. Eccles, who was a woman not prone to interfering in other people's affairs, took occasion to remark to her son the fast-developing intimacy between Doctor Anderson and Jessamine, Ned decided it was time for him to act; so, when Mrs. Eccles had finished her work in the dining-room and left Ned to himself, he walked out into the kitchen, and up to Jessamine, who, flushed and tired, was skinning her plum preserves as they boiled up in creamy yellow froth.

"Jessamine!"

She started guiltily. Ned supposed—at sound of his voice; but she turned toward him a second later; turned decisively toward him, and as Ned involuntarily glanced from her flushed face down her bare brown arms, to her hand that grasped the skimmer.

"Was it possible? but the ring was off! Jessamine had noted the glance; and as he made the sudden discovery, and his eyes shadowed with the pain the discovery gave him, and his mouth suddenly grew compressed and stern, there came a little gleam of coquetry and resentment in Jessamine's watchful eyes."

"I came to ask you about it, but I have my answer. You have given my ring to Doctor An—"

A little indignant cry escaped her, but he went on, more deliberate and stern than she had believed Ned Eccles could be.

"Or, if you have not done that, you have permitted him to remove it because you were only flirting with me. Jessamine! Jessamine! I never could have believed you were so false!"

She didn't answer for a second; then her words came, low, intense, not altogether scornless.

"Ned Eccles, I disdain to deny the contemptible accusation. I am sorry I can not give you your ring, since its loss is what you seem to regret; but—but—"

She hesitated, blushed, and glanced half-penitently to her cold lover.

"I don't want the ring, Jessamine. I did want you."

"And you don't want me now, you mean, in plain language. Well, Mr. Eccles, perhaps some one else does."

She was very saucy, and very independent, and very pretty; but Ned smothered her emotion, and bowed distantly.

"Dr. Anderson is welcome."

Then, after he had saddled Queen Mab, and gone for a wild tear over the country to ease up his heart-ache, Jessamine left her plum preserves to Mrs. Eccles' tender mercies, and stole up to her little room under the eaves, to have a good cry; for she did not like Dr. Anderson so very much, and she did just adore Ned Eccles.

She'd lost his ring, too; where, or how, or exactly when, she couldn't say; only she'd been careless enough to lose it some how; and then she was afraid Ned would scold, so she hadn't told him; then, when he took her up so quick about it, and twitted her with caring for Dr. Anderson, why, she wouldn't confess then, of course.

And so, suddenly diverged their love-path; and with no further attempt at reconciliation, Jessamine went home to New York, and Ned back to Rutgers; as miserable a pair as ever parted.

The large kitchen at the Eccles' farmhouse was gayly arrayed for the festivities of the approaching Christmastide; huge branches of holly were fastened over the tall eight-day clock, and festooned across the mantel.

It looked cheery, and in good keeping with the bright, sunshiny day, but Ned Eccles sat beside the window, looking pale, and worn and tired.

"You study too hard, my son; or else you don't get enough to eat. Which is it?"

Mrs. Eccles looked half mischievous, half earnest, as she deposited a small tray of goodies on the table.

"I've just fixed you a little lunch, Ned, against your five o'clock dinner. Tain't much—only bread and butter and preserved plums, and a glass o' milk. Jessamine made them sweetmeats."

Ned reddened at sound of her name; then smiled, and drew the plate toward him, taking a bite of the bread and butter.

"Jessamine did, eh? Mother, is she married yet?"

"Married! No, nor no signs of it; she's a changed girl, to my mind, lately—"

But she stopped suddenly; for Ned had made a peculiar grimace, then lifted his napkin to his mouth.

"Mother," he said, very quietly, but his voice trembled, "I have just escaped eating a pearl ring—the one that has caused much trouble. See here."

And he held up the lost ring.

"Sakes alive! and nobody believed but what Jessamine gave it to that yellow-haired doctor. Bless—where are you going, Ned?"

As straight to Jessamine as I can go. It may not be too late yet."

And the next day, bright, sunny Christmas, Jessamine ate turkey at Ned Eccles' side in the farm-house, with a pearl ring on her finger.

If a man rebels against the laws and takes the side of vice, that the vulgar can comprehend; but rebellion on the side of virtue is revolutionary; destroys all the old landmarks, and must be crucified.

Madame Durand's Proteges;

OR,

THE FATEFUL LEGACY.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.
AUTHOR OF "STRANGELY WED," "CECIL'S DECEIT," "ADRIA THE ADOPTED," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XI.

A SUBTLE SUGGESTION.

MADAME WAS closeted with her lawyer at the time appointed on the following morning.

There were writing materials on the little table, and beside it Mr. Thancroft occupied a straight-backed chair awaiting madame's pleasure to begin his task.

"What would you think, my friend," she queried, "of a penniless girl who as good as refuses to accept the position of my heiress? Who would have believed such foolhardy self-sacrifice could exist in our age? What do you say to the course which Mirabel Durand has taken, my good friend?"

"I honor her for it," cried the lawyer, warmly. "Ah, madame; she has the true nobility of you Durands, and if it were not for the true heir there is not another one I would as gladly see come into possession of Fairview Glen as for it all?"

"Ah!" aspirated madame. "No one asks for your wish, you exasperating man, I'll not have you force your opinions on me, I say."

"There are but two of all those who can present the shadow of a claim upon me to whom I would willingly leave the estate of the Durands; and of these, one has put away the chance. No, no, Mr. Thancroft; Mirabel Durand shall not inherit it now."

The lawyer bowed with an anxious air. She controlled the impatience he was beginning to feel.

"The pride of Mirabel Durand does not require these wide acres to back it," continued madame, with her odd, chuckling laugh. "Her independence shall not be hampered by the farms and goods and chattels I shall leave behind me. Hiss! What is that?"

The vine which trained over the window near her was agitated, and the leaves rustled though there was no breeze upon that sultry morning.

Milly Ross, fancying herself secure in her hiding-place, upon the balcony, had moved incautiously in her intense eagerness to catch every one of the madame's words.

Moving stealthily, Mr. Thancroft approached the open casement and leaned suddenly out, with one hand brushing back the screen of leaves which impeded his view.

There was no chance of escape for the offending maid. Ross crouched low in the midst of the greenery, shrinking in a horror of mortification and dismay, and burying her face, which was stained crimson with the shame of this discovery, in her thin, trembling hands.

"You?" cried the lawyer, in accents of surprise. "I would never have thought it."

"Who, who, who?" demanded madame, in the excitement of impatience and anger.

"Come," said Mr. Thancroft, stepping over the low sill to Milly's side, and clutching her not very gently by the shoulder. "Come and answer to your mistress for the motive of your eavesdropping. Come, I say."

"Oh, no, no," cried Milly in an agony of shame and remorse. "Oh, please, no!"

"Who is it?" called madame, sharply. "Who is it that would play the spy about me? Not Ross?"

But Ross it was, almost sinking with the mortification of her detection, whom the lawyer arraigned before the eye of her mistress.

"Is there not one faithful?" asked madame, bitterly. "You, Milly Ross, to turn against me! You unable to wait the little time which must elapse, that you must listen to discover if you are mentioned in my will?"

"I tell you now that I'll leave not a penny to you," continued madame, her first reproach waxing into rage. "There should have been five hundred dollars each to you, and Briggs, and Jean, but not a penny to you now, I say."

"There, go, and let Jean answer when I ring."

Ross slunk away with a sullen look upon her face. Madame could have put no greater slight or punishment upon her than by thus readily giving Jean the preference. To make matters worse, Mr. Thancroft who followed her to the door of the outer room, called to the housemaid who chanced to be loitering on the stairway.

"Stay within call, Jean; madame will have you wait upon her for the present."

He disappeared, and the girl turned to Ross with impertinent curiosity.

"Why, what's up? Has the madame got offended with her favorite? I'd ha' thought you'd have managed better just now."

"Madame'll not be any the better for the change, mark that!" said Ross, with her pale eyes gleaming in her pale face. She only meant that no other could satisfactorily supersede her in attendance upon her mistress, but Jean interpreted her in another way.

"Oh, if it's making threats that you are, maybe I'd better be telling her at once. They do say the madame has seen her warning."

But Ross passed on without deigning a reply.

And in the room where she had received her sentence of disgrace, the lawyer sat at the little table driving his quill over the parchment spread before him as he followed madame's dictation.

More than once the flexible nib hesitated or came to a full stop, and the warm-hearted little man would raise his head in deprecation and entreaty.

"Oh, not every thing, madame," he cried, as she proclaimed one of her sentences. "Oh, surely you must have some single title of natural affection. Is there not one single impulse will plead with me for Jean's boy?"

Something like a smile flitted over madame's face, but left it gray and hard as before.

"Write," she commanded, not heeding his interruption, and word for word repeated the clause as she had given it at first.

So the will was drawn in due form and signed by madame's feeble hand in presence of the butler and the housekeeper, whose signatures as witnesses were afterward affixed.

It was folded, sealed, and taken in charge by the lawyer, who afterward stalked away from the manse with a gloomy dissatisfaction plainly evinced in his manner.

He encountered the two young ladies strolling together in the maze of twisting paths which intersected madame's parterre; and Miss Durand stopped him with a gracious yet withal imperious nod of greeting.

"I was hoping to see you, Mr. Thancroft," said she, extending her hand frankly. "I want you to take my version of the wretched business which has so bitterly angered madame."

"I have heard it all," he replied, taking the little hand as though it were some fragile thing which he feared would break. "You were nobly unselfish, Miss Durand; but madame is hard as steel, and pitiless as the sphinx."

"I hope she has not made her will in my favor," said Mirabel, gravely—"I hope she has not committed that grave injustice against her own true heir."

"She has not made you heiress of her wealth, Miss Durand," said the lawyer, gloomily. "Ah, Heaven! it were better if she had."

He turned away with a hasty gesture of leave-taking.

"How provoking!" cried Fay, with a little pout. "Why couldn't he tell us who does come in for it all?"

"That would be to violate madame's confidence," responded Mirabel, calmly. "I trust the renewal of her health may leave us in ignorance for a long time to come."

In her own mind Fay was convinced that she was the fortunate legatee.

Near sunset that evening, Lucian Ware strolled by a roundabout course up from the village through the mountainous forest land, to the verge where it met with the orchards, and there he met Miss St. Orme.

She stood apparently wrapped in contemplating the beauties of the rugged scenery, which stretched before her downward to the brawling little creek with ragged pine clumps edging it. Her head, surrounded by the golden halo of floating tresses, was serenely poised, and her attitude was that of unconscious forgetfulness and charming abandon.

Ware paused with an appreciative eye for the effect, but a scornful smile just moved the curve of his lip, and brought a shadow lurking at the corner of his mouth.

"Very good, Miss St. Orme," he applauded, mentally. "The pose is excellent, that unconscious expression natural to the life, and as a whole you form a charming addition to the scene. But for all of your seeming absorption, I'd be willing to wager one of the precious years of my life that you have been perfectly cognizant of my approach. I have read you too clearly, Miss St. Orme, to be blinded by your clever little arts."

Nevertheless, he advanced and accosted her according to the spirit she had shown.

"Am I an intruder unawares, Miss St. Orme? Now, don't tell me that you had forgotten our tryst, and that this is but a chance meeting after all. I was tempted to think it, by your utter unconcern."

"Only forgotten for the moment, Mr. Ware. I'm so heedless, though, it would not be strange if I did forget. Thank me for keeping it in mind through the pleasant nature of my news. I couldn't forbear coming to receive your congratulations."

"Madame has been gracious enough to leave you her largest—perhaps her sole heirloom, then, I take it. You'll be the richest lady in the State at that rate."

"Ah, and won't I loose the strings of the misty old money-bags madame has hoarded so long! First, I'll astonish the natives of this primitive Fairview Glen, and then I'll go back to the world where I properly belong, and reign it royally enough over all my devotees; revenge myself, too, on those that have had the countenance to snub me on account of my poverty and dependence. It's a very pleasing prospect to me, I assure you, Mr. Lucian Ware."

Lucian sighed, and met her glance with a dejected, sorrowful smile.

"I congratulate you on your certain fortune, with all my heart," said he; "but it grieves me to see you so anxious to resume your broken sway out in the heartless world. I wish some tie could bind your anticipations to the Glen, unpromising as it must have seemed at first."

"What tie?" asked Fay, softly, with drooping lids, and pink flushes wavering over her cheeks.

"Dare I tell you, sweet Fay? Dare I speak to madame's heiress the words with which I would gladly woo penniless Miss St. Orme? It would be too great presumption on the part of the impecunious law-student."

"You forget our compact," said Fay. "We were to work in unison, you know."

"And does that mean the reward shall be mutually shared? I did not dare to make that a provision then, and now it must appear to you in the worst of taste to declare the mad thoughts that are possessed by me. Ah, Fay, bewildering little sprite, it is all due to your wondrous loveliness."

That was the manner in which Lucian Ware's specious tongue uttered it; but the truth was that he had been too cautious to commit himself, until quite sure of the golden prize he was planning to possess.

"Have my hopes misled me, Fay, or is it true I may even win you, peerless one?"

Coquette that she was, she had no thought of resorting to her accustomed tantalizing devices now. The first genuine heart-emotion she had ever felt had come to her through Lucian Ware; and, alas! it was not an influence which might by any means ennoble her, or seek to lead her selfish, perverted nature toward a better channel. But the sway was powerful over her, sweet beyond mere word expression; and now her eagerness to secure this handsome lover would not permit her to dally idly, as she had done before this, with the hearts of honest, true men.

No hope of yours need lack fulfillment," she answered, softly, and for the space of a moment there was silence between them.

Then Lucian Ware uttered vows and protestations, until he had forged and riveted the chain of sworn betrothal between them two. And all the time—dissembler that he was—his heart was thrilling with intense longing with the remembrance of beautiful Mirabel, while his lips were dropping utterances of love for this fair Circe.

Fay, chameleon-like in her changes, went suddenly back to the subject of the will.

"Now that it is made," said she, "madame may insist on living her century out."

Lucian Ware bent his head until the shadow obscured his face, and his eyes furtively studied his companion's expression.

"Why should not madame's warning be followed by the result?" he asked. "She would not be the first Durand who has died from poison, if traditions are true!"

CHAPTER XII.

WAS IT MADAME'S FATE?

"Why should not madame meet with the Fate?" said Lucian, with slow significance.

"Ah, you frighten me, speaking of such a terrible happening," Fay exclaimed, shudderingly. But Ware, with his eyes steadily reading her face, saw that she had not misunderstood him, and that under her shivering aversion, not at all feigned, was all of the subtle deceit and hardness he had expected to find there.

"Come, let us be candid with each other," said he, drawing her hand within his arm, and speaking in cautious, suppressed tones, as they began to pace back and forth slowly beneath the shadow of the orchard trees. "Confess that if you were driven now to choose between madame's wealth and me, you would never hesitate in wrecking these sweet dreams we have been reveling in. I have no mind to chide you for it, sweet! for while I should have loved you just the same as the dependent relative, I am more rejoiced to win the heiress of all Fairview as my future bride."

"This longing for wealth and power has been born and bred in both of us, and it is that mutual sympathy which has drawn us together. Do you think now you could bear to be disappointed in the hopes you have reared?"

Fay's eyes flashed back his glance with a hard and greenish gleam. It was a peculiarity of those strange, beryl-tinted orbs, to narrow and scintillate with a cruel green glitter when any selfish passion awoke her.

"I hate death and I fear it," she said, in tones so tense they seemed almost choking her. "I dread the awful solemnity of it and the frightful mystery; but, rather than give up these hopes I have cherished, I could watch madame struggle at its approach, suffer tortures—torments—agonies, and never quiver or feel any thing but joy over the change that should leave every thing to me."

"Madame has lived her allotted time in the natural course of events, but she has vitality enough to stand her for a score of years yet. She is so full of whimsical caprices, too, that she may alter her will any day, and on the very slightest provocation."

"Ah!" aspirated Fay, "she shall not, I say. Go on, Lucian Ware! I am not going to shrink from whatever you may have to suggest."

Instead of replying, Ware went into a somber study, from which Fay roused him presently.

"See how the shadows are lengthening," she said. "I must go back and pay court to madame before dinner is served. I have been dressing for her benefit, if it pleases you to perceive."

She dropped his arm, and, flitting a few paces away, turned herself deliberately that he might view every point of her attire, then making him a courtesy of mock humiliation, awaited his comments.

She wore the sea-green satin this afternoon. Its trained skirt was looped with waved gold cable-cord, and her over-dress, very much puffed, was of sheer white lawn, with elaborately embroidered edge. She wore the ornaments madame had given her upon her throat and arms, and she had chosen this toilet because it suited them so admirably.

"And madame is sufficiently a connoisseur in matter of dress to admit your perfect taste," said Lucian. "You could not fail to please me, little sprite, whatever you might wear."

Fay laughed in pretty, triumphant glee. Ah, the deception of appearance! One would think no guile could lurk beneath the fair exterior of that lovely face, nor lay concealed under the naive, child-like manner.

Yet she had not even dismissed the dark prompting which was stirring in her heart. She turned to Ware and dropped her voice to a cadence less piercing than an ordinary whisper.

"Oh, I hope the madame will die," she uttered in that suppressed tone and in a rapid, breathless way. "I wish that she may not live through another night. I wish that the Fate may smite her



nervously fingered the hem of her snowy kerchief.

"Haven't you some wish of cheer for me, Milly? I've been somehow downhearted missing the sight of you, and I've been hard-worked, too, for a time, though I don't say it in the way to complain."

"Well, what do you do for?" queried the maid, almost sharply. "There's no sense in it as I can see, drudging as you do, and none but yourself in the world to be cared for."

"Don't say that, lass; you know why I'm working so to get a start ahead, now. I'm doing well, too, Milly; full well as I've any reason to expect. I've been looking at a little martin-box down in the village, and I'm hoping to have the nest feathered by Christmas-time."

"I've brought you this, dear. I wouldn't get it till I saw some certainty of coming through all right."

He drew a slender little ring from his vest-pocket, like a twisted thread of gold, with a cornelian heart set in the top.

"I'll get you a plain one for a wedding-ring before long. Let me see if it's right, my darling; you know they say:

"When love will fit without a measure, happy hearts make household treasure."

But Ross drew away from him with an impatient jerk.

"I'm sure I don't want your ring, Henry North. I don't see why you should pester me with your plans when I'm not caring for your affairs. Goodness knows, I've got trouble enough without being tagged after by you."

The honest fellow's face clouded over.

"I didn't mean to trouble you, Milly. I hoped you would be glad with me at the prospect of the little home we've talked of before now. You haven't been so anxious to see me of late, but I know the reason of it and kept thinking your own good judgment would show you the right way."

"A handsome young gentleman like Lucian Ware isn't apt to mean much by his love-making, lass. It's natural you should be flattered, though certainly you couldn't help seeing that it's only his way of amusing himself."

"That's all you know, I suppose," said Ross, angrily. "That's your way of judging your betters, Henry North. You'd like me to coop myself up in your narrow martin-box, and because I don't fly at your offer, you must rail out against them that maybe are earnest as you."

"You're being blinded if you're trusting anything to Mr. Lucian," persisted North. "He'll not bring you any happiness, Milly; I wish you would believe me."

"It's no concern of yours, then, I'm willing to abide by my own sense, I'm sure."

North returned the ring to his pocket with a sigh.

"I'll wait for you, Milly," he said, gently. "You'll know which is the honest love-by-and-by. I'd like to save you from the pain of being cast off by Mr. Lucian, though, it's sure to come to that at last."

"Maybe I have better evidence," said Ross, boastfully, won to complete faith by that earnest which Lucian had bestowed upon her.

"You don't understand the ways of handsome young men like him," said North, moodily. "If I thought he meant any harm to you, by Heaven! I'd never wait."

Milly stopped him with an angry gesture.

"What do you take me for?" she asked. "I'll not have you casting slurs at either him or me. You'll be good enough to keep out of the way of meddling, after this."

"I'll not vex you, at least," he replied, sorrowfully. "Only mind this, Milly; I'll be working ahead all the same, getting ready for you some day."

"The more fool you, then!" cried Ross, angrily. "I'll be a long wait you'll have, I'm thinking."

She sped away from him then, before he could answer, had he so wished; and North, recalled to his duty, went forward to the manse.

Madame Durand was less alert as the evening drew on than she had been through the day. A feeling of oppressive languor was settling down over her which she struggled vainly to resist. Fay tripped into her presence, all soft solicitude, pouring out an effusion of anxious inquiries.

"You charming old madame, it's so naughty of you to excite yourself as you've been doing. Of course you're quite tired out now. Don't I know what it is to be wound up to such a pitch, and then to go down all at once?"

"I do wish you'd let me do something. It's too late to read to you, I suppose, and I can't sing any more than an owl. I'm a useless little mortal, I know; but I do want you to care for me, dear Madame Durand."

"Mayn't I stay up here to have my dinner with you, instead of dining in state with the others below?"

"Madame was grudgingly gracious, but excused herself politely enough from Miss St. Orme's attendance. So Fay went away again with many softly-uttered wishes for madame's bettered condition on the morrow."

Out in the queer little anteroom the setting sun was sending his last rays through the dingy red curtain. Fay half paused with a sudden shiver as she caught sight of her hand, which was a vivid crimson where the reflected light fell upon it.

"It looked like blood," she murmured to herself. "I wonder if I should feel remorse if it really were? I have thought sometimes that, if a life stood in my way, it would never cause me either a qualm or a pang to remove it."

She moved on as she heard a slight rustle without, and passed Mirabel on the landing. The latter had come to make inquiry for the madame, and finding no one in waiting, went directly to the old lady's side.

"Ah, well, what do you want?" asked the madame, impatiently arousing. "I wish to be left quite undisturbed now. Ring the bell for Jean, will you?"

"In a moment, madame. Let me wait upon you this once, will you not? I would like to feel that you are not seriously vexed on account of our interview yesterday."

Mirabel spoke wistfully, with a yearning of pity and tenderness in her young heart for this forlorn old woman, who had bereft herself of all close ties which might have been comfort and solace to her now.

But madame seemed impervious to softer feeling.

"It was your privilege," said she, grimly. "Must I repeat that I want to be left undisturbed? I'll take a nap, I think."

"Let me watch by you, then," pleaded Mirabel, with gentle persistency.

"No. Ring for Jean. Don't wait, Miss Durand!"

"Good-night, then," and as she passed by madame's chair, Mirabel stooped to press her lips lightly upon the wrinkled forehead.

As it chanced, Jean was not at hand, and Ross, who was within hearing, went—not without an apprehensive tremor—to answer the summons.

She need not have trembled, for madame had fallen into an apathy which was unobtrusive of her surroundings.

"Hand me the liniment, Jean," said she, drowsily, not observing that it was Ross beside her. "That's all, now."

Milly Ross poured the liniment into a little china basin and placed it within her mistress' reach, and, after a moment, retired softly that she might not be disturbed.

Madame dipped her right hand into the little basin, and with it, wearily chafed the left.

"How dead and numb they feel," she said to herself, "and how strangely I am feeling. Chilling and burning—how strange!"

"Oh, the will? Yes, yes!" She was wandering vaguely. "Was it right, I wonder? I wouldn't repent at the last, you see, and they'll never know—"

"It's my digestion that's wrong, that's it. A good digestion, and no heart—a good motto, ha! ha! I'll take blue mass; that'll right me."

And madame muttered on that she was being consumed with raging thirst, but the water was all ice—all ice. She was freezing in her parched mouth; ah, now she was growing chill and cold.

So was she, poor, self-deluded madame.

This was no counterfeit of death, this stark and rigid form sitting erect in the great arm-chair. There was no bright spark of light in the wide-open, glazing eyes, now.

Was this madame's fate?

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 134.)

The Wronged Heiress: OR, The Vultures of New York.

A WEIRD ROMANCE OF THE GREAT METROPOLIS.

BY BETT WINWOOD,

AUTHOR OF "THE WHITE SPECTER," "WHO WAS SHE?" "DAPHNE," "OR, THE DEBENTHAM PROPERTY," "THE DANGEROUS WOMAN," "TWO LOVES," "WHILE SHE LIVES," "VORST'S SECRET," ETC.

CHAPTER XXIV.

IN THE SNARE.

WHERE, meanwhile, was Philip Jocelyn?

When the carriage in which Belmont was so carelessly reclining, and to the back of which Dick Daredevil clung with such desperate energy, dashed away from upper Broadway, Philip was left standing on the pavement, the picture of despair.

Philip struck his brow wildly with his clenched fist, as he stood, helpless and alone, only a few yards distant from the gambling hell he had just deserted.

"Oh, my God!" he muttered, "am I to be baffled now?"

He had very little faith in Dick's unaided efforts. It seemed to him that the young man would not have sufficient inducement to persist in the search when there was nobody to spur him on. Even though he should follow the carriage to some distance, he was almost sure to let the clue slip through his fingers at last.

He did not know the dogged tenacity with which the young man was capable of adhering to an object he had once undertaken.

"What can I do?" moaned Philip. "Alas, what can I do? Belmont must be going straight to the country-house where he has secreted Mabel, and I am powerless to follow him. If Dick loses sight of him, all is lost."

Once again he looked wildly up and down the street. Not a solitary carriage or foot-voyance of any sort was in sight.

It was too late at night, or rather too early in the morning; for many people to be abroad.

He finally decided to remain where he was until morning, that Dick might be able to find him without difficulty, should he return from his wild goose chase.

He buttoned his coat to the chin, for the summer night air was cool, and leaned in a dejected attitude against the nearest lamp-post.

Though the young man knew it not, unfriendly eyes were upon him, watching his every movement.

After the lapse of at least an hour, two men approached from the deep shadow of the nearest by-street.

"Is your name Philip Jocelyn?" asked one of them, as he reached the spot where our hero was standing.

"It is," replied Philip, rousing himself from the reverie into which he had fallen.

"Then you are wanted."

"By whom?"

"The young fellow who was with you not so very long since," was the ready answer. "The same 'what rode away a-chillin' to that carriage.'"

Philip uttered an exclamation of delight.

"Where is he? And did he send you to find me?"

"In course he did."

"Where is he?" repeated our hero, eagerly.

"Just down that street," pointing to the one from which they had just emerged.

"Come right along, sir."

Philip hesitated, and glanced sharply at the two men. Something in their appearance reminded him strongly of the ruffians who had attacked him earlier in the evening.

And yet they could not be the same. Their dress was different; they could scarcely have kept him in sight all this while. Besides, had they not come directly from Dick?

"Come, sir," repeated the man, in slightly impatient accents. "There ain't any time to be wasted here. Besides, it's only a step."

Philip no longer hesitated. He suffered the two men to conduct him down the shady by-street.

He had proceeded but a very short distance, however, when he observed a close carriage drawn up to one side where the shadows were deepest.

"Who's there?" he asked, sharply.

The answer was a brutal laugh. He turned at the ominous sound, a suspicion of treachery again flashing upon his mind. Ere

he could spring clear of his guides, however, a sudden blow from behind laid him sprawling upon the pavement.

"It had to be done, Ben," said the man who had acted as spokesman from the first.

"In course," muttered the second ruffian. "But it's contrary to orders."

"Yes. He might have given us trouble again, though. He was beginnin' to suspect us."

"I know it. Lift him up, Steve. I hope you ain't let daylight through him."

"No fear o' that."

They raised Philip's inanimate form between them, bore him to the carriage, and thrust him into it.

"There's a movement about the heart," muttered Ben, leaning over him, as he lay helpless among the cushions. "He ain't dead."

"No. Now the sooner we are off, the better."

Steve jumped into the carriage, and Ben mounted to the box.

In another minute they were dashing down the street.

Philip's momentary fears had not played him false. These were the same ruffians, though in different disguises, who had assaulted him in the first instance.

They had never, both at a time, lost sight of him, save during the few minutes when he was in the far house.

They had taken that opportunity to change their dress and procure the carriage, or rather bring up the carriage from another street, where it had been waiting all along, in expectation of some such emergency.

Nothing of what had transpired had been lost on the clever rogues. And, like wise men, they took their cue from what they had witnessed.

The carriage was driven past Central Park, and so over toward Harlem.

Nearly an hour elapsed, and they were already above Yorkville, when Philip heaved a deep sigh and betrayed signs of returning animation.

"The young fellow mustn't come to his senses just yet," muttered Steve, on whom none of these indications were lost.

Leaning over his helpless victim, he held a handkerchief to his nostrils, and kept it there for a single instant.

He had the satisfaction of seeing Philip sink into a state of complete insensibility once more.

The carriage rolled on rapidly through the darkness of the night. The road into which they had struck became more and more lonely. Presently it seemed little else than a rude cart-track, overgrown with weeds.

At last the vehicle stopped before a long, low building, from the windows of which came not even a solitary gleam of light.

Both ruffians now leaped to the ground. Philip's senseless figure was lifted out, and borne between them into the house.

In gaining the door, of course they were compelled to pass the dog-kennel, in which, as already described, Dick Daredevil had taken refuge.

The instant they had crossed the threshold, the two ruffians laid their charge on the floor of the passage.

"Wait a minute," said Ben. "This is a confoundingly gloomy hole, and I'm not goin' a step further in the dark."

He struck a match and lighted a dark lantern he had brought along, hidden in the folds of his cloak.

The instant its glow had illuminated the passage, Dick Daredevil crawled out of the kennel and peeped in at the open door.

"Lord love me!" he cried, as his glance fell upon the prostrate figure on the floor. "If it ain't Jocelyn himself that the villains have nabbed! And unless I'm very much mistaken, they are the same covies who set upon him in the alley. What are they goin' to do with the gentleman, I wonder?"

It was necessary to wait and see. So he drew back far enough to escape the observation of the two men, and waited.

There was a brief delay. Then Philip was lifted as before, and borne down a flight of very steep stairs that descended from the end of the passage.

They found themselves in a moldy, vault-like place, from which a single apartment seemed to have been partitioned.

Steve produced a key from one of his pockets, and unlocked the door leading into the room.

It was small, and very plainly furnished with a pallet-bed, a couple of chairs, and a deal table; but it looked quite comfortable, when compared with the dreariness and emptiness that seemed to pervade every other part of the dwelling.

Of course, Dick had followed the villains noiselessly down the stairs as far as the open cellar.

There, hidden behind some empty barrels, he waited, with all the patience he could command, the next move the two desperate men would make.

CHAPTER XXV.

ON THE TRAIL.

PHILIP JOCELYN was laid on the pallet-bed, and Steve took his stand beside it.

"I say, Ben," he muttered, after a brief silence, "about time the cove was comin' to his senses."

"Of course it is. You'd better give him a taste of the bottle."

He pushed a brandy flask into his comrade's hand, as he spoke.

Steve poured a small quantity of the liquor between Philip's lips. The fiery draught did its work well, and the young man soon opened his eyes.

"Where am I?" he asked, looking around with a bewildered stare.

Steve laughed in a half-sneering manner.

"Where you'll be taken good care of for the present, sir."

"What do you mean? Am I a prisoner?"

"That's about the long and short of it, I reckon."

Philip was silent a moment. He now remembered what had happened. Of course these two ruffians were the same who had set upon him in the alley, when Dick Daredevil and Julia came to his rescue.

"What is the meaning of this outrage?" he asked, at last, a glow of indignation coming into his eyes.

"Don't ask any questions, and we'll tell you no lies," said Ben.

"A' whose instigation have I been brought to this wretched place?"

"That's our secret," said Steve who answered this time. "But no violence will be offered if you take things sensible like, and don't make an infernal rumpus."

"How long am I to be detained here?"

"Don't know. Until a certain person, who must be nameless, is ready to set you

free, I suppose. You are to be kept out of the way for a few weeks—that's all."

"Ah!"

A light began to break upon Philip's mind. In whose way could he be, unless it was Mrs. Landersdale's? She, and she only, could have an object in keeping him a prisoner for a short time.

"We must be off!" Ben now broke in, somewhat impatiently. "It will be daylight in a few minutes more."

"That's so."

Steve swung on his heel. "You'll be left quite alone in the house for a few hours, sir," he said, striding toward the door and turning with his hand on the latch.

"But it won't be of any use for you to holler, or try to get out, for in the first case, nobody would hear you, and in the second, you'd only have your trouble for your pains. We'll be back again after daylight, with food, and other things to make you comfortable."

He went out as he spoke, followed by Ben. Then they closed and carefully locked the door.

They passed very near to the pile of old barrels behind which Dick Daredevil had hidden himself. Instinctively the intrepid young fellow groped in the dark for something with which to defend himself.

It was unnecessary. They did not seem to think it of any use to search the cellar, and passed up the stairs without having done so.

Five minutes later he heard the roll of wheels as the carriage was driven away.

"Good!" he muttered, crawling out of his place of refuge and vigorously shaking his cramped limbs. "Now the coast is clear. When those two wretches come again, they'll find that their bird has flown, unless I'm very much mistaken."

He crawled up the rickety stairs, and took his stand in the hall, where he waited until day had really dawned.

Then, having seen and heard anything to indicate any human presence about the house, he descended to effect Philip's release.

"Are you there, Mr. Jocelyn?" he shouted, pounding on the door with his knuckles.

"Yes. Who calls?" came from within.

"Dick Daredevil."

There was an exclamation of surprise and delight. "God bless you, Dick!" cried Philip, excitedly. "You have come to give me my liberty?"

"Of course."

"Quick, quick! I can scarcely breathe in this stifling hole."

"Try to be patient, sir."

The ruffians had taken away the key, and the door was a heavy, iron-clamped affair, that looked almost capable of withstanding a siege. For a moment Dick regarded it somewhat dubiously.

"It's equal to storming the Bastille," he muttered. "But I'm not the sort of person to be easily baffled. So here goes to the rescue."

He tore down a stout timber that had once been used for a support, but from which the foundations had long since rotted away. Using this as a battering ram, he soon had the satisfaction of seeing the door tremble before it and give way.

The next instant he and Philip were shaking each other cordially by the hand.

"It's very odd that we should meet thus, after parting as we did last night," said Philip.

"Odd! It's like a play, sir. I never knew any thing like it."

"How did you happen to find me here?"

"In a very few words Dick related all that had occurred."

"I was cursing my ill luck in being so completely hoodwinked by Belmont, when the two ruffians who had you in tow made their appearance," he said, in conclusion.

"Of course, when I saw who it was, I laid low, and waited till the coast was clear, that I might come to your assistance."

"It was well. Now we can set out together in quest of Mabel Trevor."

"You think she can not be far from here?"

"I am sure of it."

"And my opinion exactly coincides with your own."

"Belmont must have suspected the game you were playing on him in pretending to be drunk."

"Of course. But he dealt me an ugly blow in the hall above. He thought I would put an end to my investigations, I suppose."

Then, after a pause, he added:

"You have not told me how you happened to be nabbed."

"In a few words Philip put him in possession of all the facts pertaining to his own adventure."

Dick looked thoughtful. "Have you any idea who is at the bottom of this affair?" he asked.

"Yes. A certain Mrs. Landersdale, of whom I think you know nothing."

A brief consultation followed in regard to the proper course to pursue, and then the two young men quitted the house.

The country round about looked singularly wild and desolate, considering its nearness to the great city. Of course they could only strike out at random, not knowing which way to turn.

After wandering about for some time, they finally struck into a high road. Here, fortunately, they soon fell in with a rough-looking lad, who was driving two lazy cows before him.

"My fine fellow," said Dick, persuasively, "can you tell me who lives in this neighborhood?"

"I do," answered the boy, with a saucy toss of his head.

"Lots of folks, sir."

Philip now drew near and slipped some silver into the boy's dirty palm.

"Can you tell me?" he said. "If one Gilbert Belmont resides near?"

"Yes, sir, I think he does," returned the lad, his manner instantly becoming respectful.

seemed anxious and distressed, and gave but a very meager greeting.

"Gilbert is out of sorts," thought the loving woman, watching him anxiously. "I wonder what has gone wrong."

The reader already knows what had occurred to distress this scheming villain. It was on that very night that Dick Daredevil had climbed up behind his carriage near the gambling-hell on Broadway, and been left for dead in the lonely old house to which he had suffered himself to be enticed.

Of course this tissue of circumstances had left its impress on Belmont's spirits. It could not well have other than a depressing effect.

Owing to all this, he did not visit his captive until a late hour of the following morning.

Mrs. Pratt preceded him to Mabel's apartment. This singular woman had quite recovered from her agitation of the previous day, and her small eyes twinkled with pleasure and ill-concealed satisfaction as they rested upon the hapless girl.

"I've brought your lover to see you, Miss," she said, maliciously.

Poor Mabel uttered a low cry of dismay, and retreated to the furthest corner of the chamber.

"Oh, Heaven protect me!" she murmured.

"Bah!" cried Mrs. Pratt, with an angry snort. "Have you no fitter welcome for the man who loves you? See, Gilbert, there are your diamonds, tumbled under the table, as if they were not worth a penny. Who ever saw such a girl?"

"Never mind the baubles," said Belmont, hastily approaching.

"Humph! Of course it's just as you please. I'd better take myself off, and leave you to plead your own cause."

"No," with an impatient wave of the hand, "remain where you are."

"Dear Mabel," he added, turning to the girl, and speaking in a softer tone of voice, "I wish Mrs. Pratt to hear me tell you how much I love you."

He sought to take her hands, but the poor frightened bird fled from him, shrieking in uncontrollable terror.

He hurried after her, with a muttered curse on his lips, and caught her, panting and breathless, in his arms.

"It is useless to beat your wings, pretty one," he whispered. "You'd better take things coolly."

"Help! help!" she called almost involuntarily. At the same instant steps were heard on the balcony outside the window—the sash was burst open with a blow that shattered glass and all—and Philip Jocelyn bounded into the apartment, followed by Dick Daredevil.

"Coward!" cried Philip, tearing Mabel from Belmont's embrace, and at the same time dealing the villain a powerful blow that sent him reeling against the wall.

"Thank God, I am here in time to foil you!"

A volley of the most dreadful curses broke from Belmont's lips. For a breathless space he stood staring at the daring intruders, speechless from rage and fury.

Then his right hand sought his breast, and clutched a small revolver, the muzzle of which covered Philip's heart, the next instant.

This movement was the signal for action on the part of Dick Daredevil. With a howl like the roar of a wild beast, he sprang upon the villain, wrenched the weapon from his grasp, and turned it against its owner.

"Take that for your treachery!" he shouted, pulling sharply at the trigger.

The weapon exploded, and Belmont fell to the floor with a groan of pain.

A shrill, piercing shriek filled the room—a shriek of such bitter anguish that it rang in Dick's ears for many a long day afterward.

Then Mrs. Pratt tottered forward, and threw herself on the body of the fallen man.

"You have killed him!" she screamed. "You have killed my son!"

The words died away in a hollow moan. Mrs. Pratt had fainted.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 130.)

Double-Death: OR, THE SPY QUEEN OF WYOMING.

A ROMANCE OF THE REVOLUTION.

BY FREDERICK WHITTAKER,
(LAURENCE POYNTE).

AUTHOR OF "THE RED KAJAH," "THE KNIGHT OF THE RUBIES," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXV.

"TO SIR HENRY—QUICK!"

Miss Charlotte Lacy was sitting in her drawing-room in Wall street. She was not alone. Opposite to her were the dark, stern, haggard features of the traitor General, who sat in a deep arm-chair, splendid in the scarlet uniform, the price of his treason. Arnold looked moody and discontented, as he always had, but there were more than usual lines of care and vexation on his brow that evening. The young lady was knitting some fancy work.

"I don't see why you, of all people, should affect to look coldly on me, Miss Lacy," he was saying. "You were sweet enough to me a short time ago."

"Pardon me, General," she interrupted, coldly, "for your wife's sake only."

"And why not be civil to me now?" he asked, irritably. "She is my wife still. What business have these people here to look at me in the way they do? What have I done to them?"

"What have you done for them?" she asked, calmly.

"I would have done much, but for the unfortunate accident of Andre's capture," said the General, irritably. "It was not my fault. Sir Henry owned it was not, when he paid me over the stipulated sum."

"Ay, you got that safe," said the lady, with a faint sneer, her knitting-needles working as if she was only intent upon them.

"Of course I did," he snapped; "the same as you take your pay. You are not the person to sneer at me for that."

"General Arnold," said the little lady, in a frigid voice, "if you can not confine your remarks to your own case, I must leave the room, or request you to do the same instead."

"Certainly, madam," he answered, standing up, his face pale with rage. "There

was a time when you were glad enough to welcome me, Miss Lacy."

"You were worth something then, General," said Charlotte, in a tone of fine scorn. "You had every thing to lose, and I had every thing to gain. Now you have lost it, and we have found out that it was not worth the trouble we took to get it. Good-evening, General."

"Nay, you shall not treat me thus," said Arnold, in a savage tone, as he was turning away, and he stepped between her and the door as if to prevent her going.

"Who are you to despise me?" he asked. "Are you not a paid spy?"

Charlotte remained perfectly calm and contemptuous in her manner, and slowly retreated to the mantel-piece, where she took her station by the bell.

"What I am, sir, I know," she said. "A consistent loyalist who has suffered much for her king. What you are, the world knows, a traitor who has got the best of Sir Henry by a shrewd bargain, and earned fifty thousand dollars for nothing, who has cost us the life of one brave soldier, and whom we all despise, while we use him."

While she was speaking the last words, there was a violent knock at the street-door, and Arnold started. The man lived in perpetual alarm now, and his once fierce, reckless courage seemed to have given way to nervous anxiety. Both listened to the sound of the opening door, heard a short colloquy, and then the door shut.

Arnold moved away from the entrance, as a servant knocked.

Miss Lacy moved forward, and received a letter from the man's hand.

"James," she said, "I'm glad you came. You're just in time to show General Arnold to the door. Good-evening, General."

She bowed with icy coldness, as if determined there should be no mistake, and the General, with a vindictive glance, took his hat and left the room, in a white heat of passion. Many such affronts was he destined to receive from thenceforth to the day of his miserable death.

Meanwhile, Charlotte opened the letter and read, at first half-unconsciously, presently with a full understanding of its meaning, the following:

"MADAM: This letter will reach you when I am a prisoner, and will inform you of what is far more dangerous to both our happiness. My poor Everard is a prisoner, on trial for deserting from his army two years ago, when he was put on parole in your power. Madam, I conjure you, if you have any affection for my poor boy, devise some means of rescuing him from the shameful doom of a deserter. You and I know how our poor lad was worked on, and what influences he had to struggle against. I am a willing prisoner, madam, because they will admit me to testify on the court-martial, but in your hands, madam, lies the true remedy. Oh, do not let it go, but save our poor lad, madam, and earn the undying gratitude of his unhappy father!—Your obedient, humble servant,

"JOHN BARBOUR."

For a moment the girl stood gazing into vacancy, with her hand pressed on her heart, as if it were bursting. Then she sprang to the bell-ropes, and rung violently for the servant.

"Who brought this letter?" she demanded, with deathly-pale face and flashing eyes.

"A saffroning man, madam," said he, respectfully. "He told me he'd wait for an answer, but when I came back he was gone."

"Gone! gone, man? Why did you let him go?" almost screamed the lady, in a manner so different from her usual composure, that the servant evidently thought his mistress had gone mad on a sudden.

"I didn't know, madam," he stammered.

For a moment she seemed as if she would burst out upon him with a tempest of reproaches. The next, she had controlled herself.

"Order the carriage, quick!" she said. "I'm going to Sir Henry Clinton's."

In a minute the man had disappeared, and the girl hurriedly paced up and down the room, with her hands to her forehead.

"Fool, fool, fool!" she muttered. "I thought I was only playing with him, and lo! I have found I love him. Everard a prisoner, and in danger of being shot! Why did not I know this before? Oh, heavens! what have my plots come to, at last? I have killed my darling! Oh, how shall I save him? Has this accursed Arnold drawn him in, as well as poor Andre? I must save him. I will, if it cost me my own life!"

She remained pacing up and down, muttering incoherently, till the rumble of wheels was heard in the street below. Then she hastily caught up a cloak and hood, and hurried down stairs, opening the door herself as the servant rang the bell. The night air blew chill and cold, but she heeded it not. She ran down the steps and jumped into the carriage.

"To Sir Henry, quick!"

And away went the carriage at a rapid pace, on the way to the foot of Broadway.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ANGELS' VISITS.

EVERARD BARBOUR sat alone in his tent at night, the steady tramp of a sentry before the door, showing that he was in close arrest. The lad looked haggard and unshaven, downcast and dejected. His trial had gone against him so far, and he could not get rid of the affidavit of Timothy Murphy taken two years before. The rifleman had then sworn positively that the lieutenant had been found by him in open friendship with the enemy, and that he had refused to leave when the way was open.

From that time till he came to the posts of the American army to give himself up, he had not been seen, except by some exchanged prisoners of his own regiment, who swore that they had recognized him in New York, as the captain of a troop of Simcoe's Queen's Rangers. The time of his reporting at Philadelphia, by some mystery, was omitted, and he remained on the rolls as a deserter, from the time of his discovery by Double-Death, in Cherry Valley.

The only evidence taken so far had been that of the dragoons who had seen him in New York, and they had been examined at great length. Tim Murphy was not to be found, for some mysterious reason, and his testimony of two years' old was regarded as sufficient. Everard was allowed to see a copy of these proceedings, and discovered, to his surprise, an important fact.

The charges and specifications against him, drawn by General Arnold in Philadelphia, had been, as he distinctly remembered, *two in number*; the first, for "conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman" by its very specification proving that he had reported for duty in Philadelphia, at a time

when he was said to be in New York, or elsewhere with the enemy.

The charge, in these proceedings, taken in his absence, was *single*, and wholly for desertion. The reason was now plain. Arnold had been only too glad to find the dangerous knowledge of his aid-de-camp removed from his path, and had arraigned him on a charge of which he knew him to be innocent.

But how was he to prove this?

There was only one witness, besides Arnold, and Charlotte Lacy and his father, who could swear positively to his being in Philadelphia on the date in question. That man was the sergeant of dragoons in his old office there. He inquired for the sergeant.

The poor sergeant was dead, killed at the battle of the Chemung, under General Sullivan, a year before.

What was he to do now?

He could only wait, protracting the cross-examination of witnesses from day to day, without indicating the line of his defense, till the time came.

The time had come at last.

He was notified that on the next day he would have to open his defense and summon his witnesses, and the poor lad felt very down-hearted about it. He had nothing but his own unsupported word to offer. Tim Murphy had not returned, and he knew not where he could be. Only a vague feeling of hope arose in his mind from that very circumstance, for he knew the scout would not have dared to be absent without leave from *superior authority*.

That evening, as he was sitting pondering, a knock came at the tent door. Full of excitement, expecting Tim come back at last, he jumped up and threw open the flap. He almost dropped on the earth with astonishment, as he was met by the pale face of Marian Neilson!

Marian Neilson it was, no longer healthy and rosy as of yore, but pale and thin, careworn and sad in appearance. But her eyes beamed with the old light as she looked on Everard, and the youth exclaimed:

"Oh! thank God, Marian! I shall see you before I die."

The girl shuddered.

"Die, Everard! What for?"

"Oh! Marian, they have brought a deep plot against me. They said that you had married an Indian, the chief Black Eagle, and they enticed me away from Philadelphia, and carried me off to sea, and then kept me in the midst of the red-coats, while I was reported a deserter, and I only a prisoner."

"And the beautiful girl you were to marry?" asked Marian, in a low voice.

"Is she here too?"

"Whom do you mean?" asked Everard, blushing scarlet.

"I don't know," she said, simply. "I never saw her, but Tim said she was very beautiful, and I know I'm not, Everard, and so I suppose you were right to leave poor Marian, dear. Your father always said we were beneath you in family, you know."

"Marian, as God is my judge," said Everard, solemnly, "I have been faithful to you, even when I believed you false. You are my only love yet."

"Do you truly mean that, Everard?"

The girl's eyes filled with tears as she asked. She was a gentle, quiet thing, and not prone to show much emotion.

"As God hears me, I love you, and you only, Marian," he answered, taking her hand.

"Then I am very happy, Everard," she answered, and began to cry to prove it.

"But you, Marian? How came you here?" asked Everard, presently. "Who came with you, and why did you come?"

"I came because Mr. Murphy came and told us of your danger, dear," she said.

"And mother and Black Eagle came with me."

"Why," asked Everard, starting back, an angry, frown on his brow. "Whom said you?"

"Mother and Black Eagle," said Marian, quietly. "Why, did you not know that the chief has been baptized? He has kept us from harm ever since we nursed him out of the danger of death, two years since, and he was made a Christian a little while ago."

"I know nothing," said Everard, a little sulkily. "Tell me all about it, please."

And then she told him how Queen Esther had carried her off from Bemis' Heights, and how Double-Death had rescued her, shooting Black Eagle through the body, and nearly getting throttled, in spite of all, by the fierce chief.

"And Murphy was so much worked up that he wanted to kill the chief," she continued; "but I wouldn't allow him, when the poor creature lay so quiet and helpless there. So we staid in the woods with him, nursing and tending him, till he began to get better, and then he came home with us, protecting us in his turn from all other Indians on the way. And oh! Everard, they say Indians are not grateful, but I tell you the chief is grateful to itself. Brother could not be more devoted, affectionate, and respectful, than he is to me; and he has taken such care of mother on the way."

Everard mused, and said:

"He may be able to save my life. If he will tell the truth he will know why I could not escape from the Glen of Sheshequin. It was because I was on parole to him and Queen Esther, and Miss—"

"Miss who, Everard?" asked Marian, innocently.

"I must not tell," he said. "I have given my word of honor never to reveal what has passed between us to mortal, I can not break it, even for you, Marian."

"I do not ask you," she said, simply. "You never told me a lie, and I can trust you fully. Shall I call in mother and the chief? You can see if he knows any thing to benefit you. We are all here together, under pass of dear General Washington, to see you whenever we want."

"And where is your father?" asked Everard.

"He is at home," she said, with a faint smile. "Ever since the time he was tied to the tree by that wicked Queen Esther's people, he has been afraid to leave home. Poor father! It was two days before they found and let him out."

"Well, then, bring them in," said Everard. "I shall be very glad to see your mother."

"And Black Eagle, too," she said, brightly. "Indeed you'll like him now. He is a noble creature."

"I hope so," said Everard, coldly. He was still very jealous of the chief, and did not wish to think too well of him.

"Come in, chief, come in, mother!" cried Marian.

And then the gigantic form of Black

Eagle entered the tent, and the chief stooped his lofty plume in a grave salute to Everard.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE MYSTERIOUS BOAT.

ON that same evening, the long whale-boat, which had carried Hamilton and Murphy to their daring expedition into New York, was pulling rapidly away from the dock down the river toward Governor's Island.

John Barbour sat in the stern unconfined, talking to Hamilton.

"Indeed, colonel," he said, "your arrival was a God-send to me, for though our opinions differ, I can not let my son be shot when I know his innocence. I am most grateful to you, sir, for your kindness in permitting me to write to the lady, and I can answer for it that you shall not repent your generosity. I never thought I should feel so grateful toward a rebel—I mean, a gentleman of your opinions."

"The accident is, happy, sir," said the colonel, courteously. "We came on an errand of retribution, but I am glad that it has changed into one of mercy. But you say nothing of your own fate, sir. Are you aware of your position?"

"I know it well, sir," said John Barbour, gravely. "I have kept my life in my hands too long to fear to lose it. But I trust I shall be allowed to testify in my son's behalf before my trial, if I am indeed tried for a spy."

"I will answer for that," said Hamilton, warmly. "I never thought, sir, that I should feel so much respect for a man in your position."

John Barbour bowed gravely. "He had made not the slightest resistance since his capture, only asking permission to write the note which he had sent to the house of Charlotte Lacy by no less a hand than that of Tim Murphy."

The boat skimmed swiftly through the fog, the strong ebb-tide carrying her below the Battery in a very short time, when they shaped their course toward the desolate flats of Jersey between Paulus Hook and the village of Bull's Ferry, keeping well in the middle of the stream to avoid the guard-boats that prowled along either shore.

The pull up the North river was long and wearying, the same tide that had carried them down being equally strong to prevent their ascent. The men settled to their work, and the oars were double manned, so that they progressed steadily up the river till the ruins of Fort Washington were passed, and they headed toward those of Fort Mifflin.

It was while here, heading so as to pass the Block-house at Bull's Ferry, and hand on the unoccupied ground above, that the sound of oars in rapid pursuit from the city behind them struck on their ears, and in a few moments it became plain that some one was after them. The night was too dark and misty for any thing to be clearly distinguished beyond the dark loom of the banks and a few faint, half-drowned lights here and there.

"Get your arms ready, lads, and hold water," said Hamilton, in a low voice. "We may have to fight."

The men hastily unbuttoned their peajackets, and left them loose, so as to have their pistols ready, while still protected from the rain. The sound of oars behind them increased rapidly. It was evident that the pursuing boat was in no fear of detection, for the thunder of the tholes in the rowlocks and the splash of the broad blades was incessant, telling of a strongly manned boat. As the Americans simply maintained their position, and their oars were muffled, it was probable that they had not yet been seen or heard.

Who was in the following boat was therefore a mystery.

Presently they saw it looming through the gloom some distance on the port beam, a boat much larger than their own, crammed with men, and pulling nearly thirty oars. In the middle of the boat was the outline of a horse, and the whole craft moved by them with surprising rapidity, going as it was against current and tide.

Not a word was spoken by the Americans till the other boat was out of sight, pulling directly toward where they were going to land themselves. Then Colonel Hamilton gave the order in a low voice:

"Pull, men, but pull silently. Keep your arms ready."

The Americans stretched to their oars, following the sound of the dashing sweeps of the strange boat, but in spite of their efforts the sound became fainter and fainter, the other boat leaving them fast as the dark line of the Palisades frowned higher and higher before them. At last it went almost out of hearing. The whale-boat pulled steadily on for near an hour more, when the dark cliffs that indicated their landing-place rose before their sight. Just as they were within two cable-lengths of the shore they again heard the thunder of oars, and the great boat came shooting down upon them from the shore with all the augmented speed given by favoring tide and current. It passed close to them on the outside, but no notice was taken of them as it swept by into the darkness.

But they could see one thing plain enough. The horse was gone.

It had evidently been landed, and the strangers not seeing them in the shadow of the Palisades, had returned to New York.

"Give way, boys," said the colonel, earnestly. "They've landed a spy of some sort, and we may catch him."

The men bent to their oars with a will, and in a few moments the boat's nose grated on the sandy beach. Even in the darkness the plain prints of a horse's hoofs could be traced on the white sand leading up to an old dirt road that climbed the hills toward Morristown.

* Called Fort Knyphausen by the British, after the Baron General of that name.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 127.)

Ingredients of Precious Stones.—Very few persons who admire or deal in precious stones are acquainted with the internal structure of these valuable minerals, and most persons will be astonished to learn that these bodies, apparently so solid and homogeneous, are often full of minute cavities, which inclose a liquid. Sapphires generally contain fluid cavities. Sir David Brewster met with one no less than a third of an inch long, but other authors have seen none more than one-tenth of an inch in diameter. These are usually half-filled with a mobile and highly expansible liquid, which is considered to be carbonic acid. Sapphires are composed of pure alumina,

colored by a metallic oxide. The ruby is also colored alumina. Cavities, we are told, are far less numerous in these than in sapphires, and, moreover, they appear to contain only water or a saline solution. Occasionally a liquid with similar characteristics to that observed in sapphires is to be seen, but not often; and we are thus led to suppose that the stone may be produced by different reactions and under different physical conditions.

Emeralds are often full of cavities which contain a liquid that does not expand when heated, and is apparently a strong aqueous saline solution. The diamond is, of course, the most interesting of all our precious stones, the origin and mode of formation of which has always been a great puzzle to chemists and mineralogists. Its structure has already been studied by Goppert, who discovered what he conceived to be organic remains, and hence infers that the diamond is the result of vegetable decomposition under peculiar conditions. Sir David Brewster first noticed fluid cavities in the diamond, and explained the optical peculiarities of some diamonds by their presence. Cut diamonds sometimes inclose minute crystals of a different mineral, to which circumstance they also owe in part their peculiar optical properties. In the diamond, also, the inclosed liquid appears to be carbonic acid, as shown by its extraordinary expansibility.

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MY FIRST WATCH.

BY JOE JOE, JR.

Indeed it was a princely gift,
Made out of shining silver metal;
"Was somewhat larger than a bun,
And somewhat smaller than a kettle."
It had a frank and open face,
With milestone figures all around it;
I was a little bit of boy,
But soon grew bigger while I owned it.
Sometimes that watch was several days
Behind the time, if 'twas a minute,
Then I would lubricate the wheels
By emptying the oil can in it.
Its large wheel was an overshot,
I hardly think it was a Turbine,
It had a very powerful spring,
That would have answered for a carbine.
I used to tell what time it was
Merely by opening the case of it,
And adding to or taking from,
Figuring with chalk upon the face of it.
I wound it every half an hour—
Or often when it was shifty,
It would run either way quite well,
I always wound it with the door-key.
It answered well for an alarm,
Sometimes 'twould go off like a spinnet,
And then, I bet you, time would fly—
Crowding a whole day in a minute;
Or time would lag upon its hands,
And every day have forty hours,
Then there would only be three meals—
The latter taxed my feeble powers.
When'er it needed to be cleaned,
And went with too much of a clatter,
I used to take it from the case,
And pump it very full of water.
One day it wouldn't go at all,
Or only start at times to buzzin',
I thought it had too many wheels,
And so knocked out a half a dozen.
And then I oiled it well with tar,
The best thing I could do, I reckoned,
Then it kept time so very well
It never let go of a second.
But then, at last, I made it go—
The best way when they are a bother—
I traded it to Jones' boy,
And got a flogging from my father.

The Chouan.

BY LAUNCE PONTZ.

We have all of us heard of the French Revolution. There are even some men living who remember it, although their number grows less every day; but there are not many of us well acquainted with that counter-revolution, within France, itself excited by the excesses of the first, which goes by the name of the Vendean Rebellion. And yet this war, ending in failure as it did, was productive of many instances of the most lofty and self-sacrificing heroism on both sides.

The French Revolution, at its commencement, the struggle of an oppressed people to cast off tyranny, soon became a merciless tyranny of the lowest thieves of the rabble over anybody who ventured to think different from them—a tyranny enforced by the guillotine in all directions, till at last the peasants of La Vendee rose up and rebelled against it.

In the quiet, shaded corner of a pasture-field, where the grass had grown long and straggling from neglect and lack of animals to feed it off, was a little group of three persons, one sunshiny morning in June, in the year 1795. One of these persons was a man—a coarse-featured, heavily-built fellow, with a short, bristling black beard, apparently as strong as a bull. One of his legs had a white bandage round it, below the knee, and he wore the brown peasant dress of a game-keeper, with the white cockade in his hat that denoted him to be a Chouan, as the rebels of La Vendee were called by their enemies.

The other two persons were a lady, in the poor remains of a rich silk dress, much torn in its progress through bushes, and a little baby which she held to her bosom.

All three appeared to be anxious and uneasy, especially the lady, as if expecting some enemy momentarily.

"Oh, Pierre," said the lady, in a low voice, "do you really think that we can remain here all day, without discovery?"

"Easily, madame the countess, answered the Chouan, putting on an appearance of confidence that perhaps he did not feel. "Guillaume Achard owns these fields for near a mile round, and he will keep every one away from here. The cursed 'Reds' think him a *Sans-culotte* like themselves, but all the while he is as good a royalist as myself. He will send us on in the evening, unless the Reds happen to come down this lane before—*Pst!* Some one comes."

The little group cowered closely under the hedge, and kept still. All around them the fields were bordered with just such hedges, thick and matted, almost impenetrable for horse or foot, and further strengthened with trees planted at intervals. It was the very character of country that rendered the war in La Vendee so long and lingering, allowing half-armed and undrilled peasants to contend for years against the best troops of France. At first, indeed, well acquainted with the country as they were, and taking advantage of their enemies' ignorance, the Chouans had defeated the "Reds" many times, and had taken Nantes. But now, at last, under the wise leadership of Hoche, the Republicans were steadily crushing out all armed resistance, and the Chouan Rebellion was almost in the death-throes.

Pierre Gavotin was one of the victims of the last sanguinary defeat, wounded in the leg by a musket ball, at first slightly; but since that time fever and exposure had aggravated the wound, so that he was very lame. And yet the poor fellow refused to go home and be nursed, which he might have well done. He was determined to stay and see his ancient mistress, the countess of Laroche-Guyon, safe out of the country, by one of the St. Malo smugglers, running to England. The count, whose game-keeper he had once been, had been killed on the last fatal field, and this will explain how Pierre and his mistress came to be hiding behind the hedge.

As they cowered closer, they could hear the tramp of a number of men coming down the stony lane on the other side of the hedge, and every now and then the clink of a canteen against a musket announced that the men were armed. Indeed, coming together in a crowd in those days, they were nearly sure to be so.

Pierre listened for several minutes. The tramp came nearer and nearer.

"It is the Reds," he whispered, at last. "A whole company coming down this way."

"Sans-culottes! A common term, given at first to French Republicans, signifying literally, 'without breeches,' much like our own 'great unwashed,' became a name which they soon took to themselves as the originally ragged rabble became the companions of Europe. 'Reds' is a corruption of Red Republicans, so called from the red cap of liberty, then so fashionable.

They must be going toward Rennes. Keep still, madame, and above all, keep the little count still, and they will pass by. They can not see us."

He rose up on hands and knees, and reached over for his gun, while the poor countess cowered under the hedge closely, with one hand raised to still the infant, in case it should cry.

Closer and closer came the tramp of the marching column, and they began to hear the buzz of conversation quite plainly, above the clatter of canteens.

It was indeed their enemies, the "Reds," coming!

Soon the head of the column passed them, the men talking together and quite unconscious of their vicinity.

"We've driven the dirty Chouans out of the country," said a rough voice, presently. "Don't be too sure," said a second. "There may be a lot of them under this very hedge, for all you know."

Then they passed on, laughing.

The poor mother heard the remark and cowered closer, while Pierre reached over again for his gun. The baby just at that moment uttered a low whimper. Pierre looked back, and there was a soldier's head turned sharply and suspiciously, looking over the top of the hedge into the field.

The countess hushed the child instantly, but it was too late. The noise had been heard.

"Halt! some one in the field," cried the soldier, and instantly there was a clinking of musket-loops.

"Stay here till night," whispered the Chouan, hurriedly, in the confusion and noise caused by the alarm. "I will get them off the track."

Without any hesitation he jumped up and limped forward along the line of the hedge toward the head of the column, in full sight. His scheme was successful. The Republican soldiers saw him and the whole column started on a run to catch him. Lame as he was, he managed to clear the field and cross the hedge through a gap into the next one before he halted. Then he faced about, and threw up his arms. "Don't shoot, messieurs!" he cried. "I surrender."

"There are no more messieurs!" shouted a soldier, angrily. "We are all of us citizens, and you are a cursed Chouan. Take that!"

As he spoke he fired hastily, and missed his aim.

"Down with the Republic, then," answered Pierre, and the next minute the soldier fell, shot through the body, while the rash Chouan was surrounded by an avalanche of men tumbling over the hedge between them, which was much lower here. Then he was beaten down, fighting desperately with his clubbed gun, and would have been killed, but for the sudden appearance of an officer, who leaped the hedge on horseback and called off the men.

"Don't shoot him yet!" he cried. "Take him to the General. He can give us some information."

And then, as the soldiers fell back, he continued to poor Pierre, who lay on the ground, with a broken arm, and a bayonet-stab in the thigh.

"You are the man who fled with the Countess of Laroche-Guyon. Where is she?" Tell us, and I spare your life. Refuse, and you hang on that tree."

"The countess is in the village of Notre Dame aux Pres," said the Chouan, boldly, "at the house of Simon the tailor. Take me there and I'll show you where she's hidden; but remember, you spare my life."

"Certainly," said the Republican officer. He was delighted to get his news so quickly. "Get a stretcher, men, and carry him there."

An hour afterward the stretcher, with its bloody burden, was deposited on the village green, outside the house of Simon the tailor. This man was a rabid Red Republican, and Pierre's sole object in naming his house was to draw suspicion on him, and throw the soldiers off the scent of the poor countess. As he entered the village he beheld his friend, Guillaume Achard, apparently the foremost of "Reds," with a greasy crimson cap on his head, bellowing the Marseillaise.

"Let us see this dog of a royalist!" shouted Achard, coming near and motioning as if to strike Pierre. "Ah, canaille! We have thee at last, and we'll soon have thy bloody aristocrat, the countess. Where hast thou hidden her?"

Pierre made a sign, almost imperceptible, but which his friend saw and understood. It was the sign of the cross. It signified that Pierre was about to die to keep his secret. Guillaume asked a question with his eyes, and Pierre answered aloud.

"Where she was?"

Then he called to the captain of the soldiers, who was just knocking at Simon's door, and said to him, "The countess is in the village of Notre Dame aux Pres, at the house of Simon the tailor. Take me there and I'll show you where she's hidden; but remember, you spare my life."

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"Capitaine," he said, with a defiant laugh, "I have fooled thee. The countess is on the road to Brussels by this time, and thou canst do what thou wilt to me. I have given her time to escape, so: *Down with the Republic!*"

The words were hardly out of his mouth when the captain, furious at having been outwitted, shot him down with a pistol.

The devoted fellow fell back, murmuring to Achard:

"Carry her off to-night!"

And Guillaume did it. The countess escaped in safety to England, and her boy had grown to manhood before she came back at the Restoration. Her first pilgrimage then was to the grave of poor Pierre, the brave and devoted servant who had given his life to save hers, and who left as his memorial one of those generous deeds that make precious in history the name of THE CHOUAN.

Mohenesto!

Trap, Trigger and Tomahawk.

BY HENRY M. AVERY,

(MAJOR MAX MARTINE.)

X.—*Hunters' Life.—Their Toilet.—Mountain Style of Mourning.—Trapping and "Caching."*
—*The Thieves.—On the Trail.—The Penalty.—Fate of the Thieves.—In a Trap.—A Ride for Life.—Come on.—Safe at Last.*

A LIFE on the plains, and in the mountains of the Far West, has its good chances as well as its bad ones, and no man or set of men can be happier than the trapper. At first, to one accustomed to luxuries and modern refinement, nothing can be more unpleasant than a trip across the plains, but every day thus spent he feels himself endowed with a new life; gets toughened until meals that a common beggar in the streets of New York would hardly deign to look at, are by him eaten with a relish, to which he has all his life been a stranger. His are the kind of tramps to cure dyspepsia and fits of melancholy; to get a man down

is always sufficient to guide the rightful owners to their cache.

There are undoubtedly thousands of caches, whose owners had gone back for another addition to their stock, but were "wiped out," and never returned. Having concealed our furs, we changed our course, and visited some streams about a hundred miles to the westward. We had been encamped here about a week, when, one morning, it was discovered that two of the party had deserted, taking with them four of the best horses.

At the time the discovery was made I was absent from the camp, and did not return until near the middle of the day. Supposing that the deserters had taken this method of avoiding the rough work of trapping through the winter, the hunters, who were eastern men, but who, unfortunately, had not gone through the delicate operation of cutting their wisdom-teeth, thought nothing about it until my return, when it was mentioned to me.

I told them they ought to have signaled me to return to camp the moment they found it out. One of the hunters asked if we were not lucky in getting rid of them; for they were proverbially lazy, and neglected no opportunity of shirking their duty. I said "Yes, we would be lucky to get rid of them, but not so lucky to get rid of our furs. Those two men have gone back on purpose to break open our cache and steal our furs."

No one had thought of this, but I was positive; and selecting one of the best men, a hunter from Maine, we started in pursuit of the thieves.

The leadership of a party of trappers is a very responsible situation; occupying a position corresponding to that of a captain of a vessel, where all depends on his success. If a captain is fortunate, and returns from a profitable voyage, he is a first-rate officer, and stands well for the future, in the eyes of the owners of the vessel. But, if he has experienced unusual hardships, and returns more or less unsuccessful, he is disgraced in his command and thrust aside for some more fortunate man.

This is just the case with trappers in the mountains—whether their fortune may be

The penalty most generally prescribed for such crimes as this on the frontier is death, and we were prepared to shoot the runaways the instant we could get them within range of our rifles.

There was a bright moon, and the sky was clear, so that there was no difficulty in keeping up the pursuit. Near midnight we reached the vicinity of the pass, and were rewarded by catching the glimmer of a camp-fire. I thought they were there, and resolved, if it was so, to make them pay dear for their whistles.

We rode quietly forward, until within a few hundred yards, when we dismounted, tied our horses in a ravine, and made the rest of the way on foot. Advancing with caution, we were soon near enough to the camp-fire to get a fair view of those around it.

No white men were there, but in their places were eighteen or twenty Assiniboine Indians quietly encamped, and so unsuspecting of danger that nothing of any sentinel could be seen.

Having satisfied ourselves on this point, we withdrew to where we had left our horses. I found we had made a mistake, and told my companion we would have to wait until morning before we could do any thing more.

Withdrawing to a safe point, we lay down and slept soundly during the remainder of the night, for our horses as well as we needed rest.

In the morning we held a short consultation, and resolved that we would not give up the pursuit so long as there was any prospect of recovering the stolen property.

I was a little afraid they had given us the slip, yet it was possible we had not got ahead of them, in which case we stood a good chance of coming across them; but if we had just missed them—that is, if they were ahead of us in reaching the pass—we might as well give up the chase and return to camp.

With this conviction we rode quietly along, until the greater portion of the forenoon was passed, but not a sign of the runaways could be seen. We began to think that we were on a fruitless errand, and that the most prudent course we could pursue was to make the best time we could back to camp.

The pursuit had led us into the most dangerous portion of the Assiniboine country, where the greatest care was necessary to escape collision with the Indians.

We rode until the sun indicated noon-time, without seeing any signs of the deserters, and then gave up the chase. With the mental resolution to settle the account with them, should we ever meet them, we started back to camp.

In the afternoon we crossed a small stream, and were surprised to find the trail of the deserters. The footprints showed that their animals were being rode at full speed; and a more careful examination of the soft earth along the stream, revealed the fact that they had been pursued by Indians at the time.

The trail led toward a piece of timber about half a mile to the left, and under the conviction that a fight must have taken place at that point, we put our horses into a gallop and rode toward it.

We were mistaken in our supposition; for less than a hundred yards from the edge of the timber, we found all four of their horses stretched upon the ground, perfectly riddled with bullets. The question was, what had become of the men? But I knew they could not have stood it long after their horses were killed; and, thinking to find the bodies of the trappers somewhere near, we searched awhile for them, but could discover no trace.

It was my opinion that they had been captured by the Indians, carried away, and put to death. This was undoubtedly the case, as they were never heard of afterward.

We took the most direct route for our camp, riding along at an easy gallop, and saving the strength of our horses as much as possible. I knew we were in constant danger of an encounter with Indians, and we were obliged to be prudent, and keep our horses in good trim. We did not know how soon we would be obliged to depend upon them for our own safety.

Every little while we came across signs of Indians, but with a little care we avoided them until we had passed over the greatest part of the distance to our camp. We were riding along in a careless manner, talking and laughing with each other, when there suddenly appeared four Indians right ahead of us. They were all well mounted, painted, and decked out in a gaudy manner with feathers, and the daubs upon their faces showed unmistakably that they were upon the war-path.

I did something then which, to an inexperienced person, would seem the height of rashness. As soon as I caught sight of them, I said "Come on," to my companion, and putting spurs to our horses, we were plunging forward at a breakneck rate.

The Indians instantly wheeled, and rode away at the same furious rate, while we went after them, shouting and yelling as loud as we could.

About fifty rods were passed in this manner, when fully sixty warriors suddenly came to view beneath a hill, where they had been waiting in ambush for us.

We spoke not a word, and my companion looking inquiringly at me, I nodded to signify that we should keep up the chase. It was instant death to turn back, while to advance looked almost as bad.

Urging our horses, we kept straight ahead, and made a regular cavalry charge, though on a small scale.

When the Indians saw that we did not intend to retreat, they separated into two divisions, by about the distance of a hundred yards, and holding their rifles ready, awaited the moment to empty our two saddles. We bent our heads to our horses' necks, and they strained every nerve. We held our guns in our hands, but did not fire, for in a running fight the great fear of the hunter is that he may find himself dismounted, with an empty rifle, in his hands.

It was a fearful ride. At one time we were within thirty yards of the Indians, who sent the bullets whistling about our ears. Our clothes were literally riddled, and we received several slight wounds; but by a wonderful interposition of Providence—which, I always called "good luck"—neither of us were seriously injured; neither were our horses more than scratched.

We did not slack up for a moment, and the Indians, continuing the pursuit, but a short time, finally withdrew, leaving us to reach our camp in safety.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 129.)



THE CHOUAN.